

Christ is Victor

JUL/AUG 1999

Bridging the Gap

In a large tenement building in a poor section of New York City, lived a family of three orphan boys. The oldest, although only in his early teens, tried to take the place of the parents of whom they had been bereaved only six months prior to the occasion of which I write.

One tragic night the tenants of the large building were rudely awakened from sleep by the startling sound of a fire alarm. Part of the great structure was in flames. Sympathetic neighbours, who soon gathered to the scene, quickly succeeded in rescuing from the doomed building all the occupants except the three lads.

By this time the lower floors were a roaring furnace and all attempts to enter proved in vain. So the eyes of the crowd were directed to an upper story window where three pale faces appeared.

Oh, the suspense of that moment! What could they do? Even as they watched they saw them leave that window to reappear at another which was directly opposite to the window of a closely built neighbouring building.

Then they saw the older brother throw himself across the space between and grasp the window sill of the next building, thus making a human bridge of his own body. At his instruction, the two younger broth-

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"The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind"

Ps. 146:8

He was an unforgettable person. Short, stocky heavily built. He became blind in his early childhood and eminent eye surgeons said that he would never see again.

It was through one of the doctors of the Fellowship, a well-known surgeon Dr. Jayasingh, he first heard of the love and salvation of Jesus. He was gloriously transformed within. His life became radiant, as hope lit up his life. Soon his eye began to see dimly. We called him David.

The last time I saw him, he was standing about 30 yards away from the car. I was in a hurry and was getting into the car wanting to get to my meeting on time. David was too late to catch a bus, which would take him to the meeting. I called

out "David do you want to go to the meeting?" You can't imagine how he dashed to the car like a sprinter. No blind man dare run that way. I asked if he could tell the colour of my shirt and of my trousers. He could, and we were thrilled to see his eyesight restored.

But the main thing is that in David's short life on earth, (he died in his early thirties), God gave him spiritual sight and he carried the Good News of Jesus to many whom I could not reach. The story of healing and leap from despair to hope and happiness gripped the attention of many.

How true is the Word of God, which says, "*The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind.*" (Ps. 146:8) Who can open the eyes of the spiritually blind? Who can send light into a darkened understanding? The

Bible says, "It's the Lord who opens the eyes of the blind."

When the Lord Jesus called the religious leaders of His day, blind men, they asked in astonishment, "*Are we blind also?*" (John 9:40)

Of course no man likes to be called a blind man. Educated men feel that education and this space age have really opened their eyes. But alas what blindness has befallen men today. Materialism has blinded

them. Their values are so perverted that they appear to enjoy the total spiritual vacuum in which they live. Of course it is an illusion. To be upon a rudderless ship, however beautiful its appearance and interior decoration, without

compass and chart would be the most nightmarish and fearful experience that a man can know. What is the good of a house loaded with things and a bank balance, weighs you down with a consciousness of bigness, blinds you so that you cannot see where you are going, ties you up with cares that you do not have a moment of peace?

Eternity is not something to be played with. A man who does not make certain where he is going to spend Eternity is no more than a madman and a blind man.

Men are blinded too by pure, ugly, uncontrollable, raw, animal lust. No woman is safe these days in high society circles. Why talk of the slums? Slum ways have overtaken the societies. The immoral and

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

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Benefits of “Buffeting”

A young minister who had dedicated his life to helping humanity had been placed in a large city, and had been working for the poor and needy. One morning he took a mental inventory of his life, and the longer he thought the more disheartened he felt. His clothes were threadbare, his little room was bare and cheerless. His meagre wage barely covered the cost of life's necessities. As he sat on the edge of his bed with those hopeless thoughts, he felt as some of us have felt at times, that we have more troubles than any one else.

In this discouraged and unhappy frame of mind he went to his work. That day he would visit some of the poorest people in the whole city. They lived in tiny boats tied along the river's bank. In one boat he found an old man, sick and blind, living all alone. There he lay in the dirt and squalor and filth on his cot, with no one to care for him. It was plain to be seen that he needed food and clothing; so, hurrying back to the city, the young missionary solicited some food and wearing apparel, then returned to the dingy little boat to minister to the poor old blind man.

He put clean clothes on the old gentleman, gave him some food to eat, and tried to clean out the wretched little room. Then, kneeling down by the bedside, he prayed that the Lord would bless and comfort the one so much in need.

As the young minister arose from

his knees, he saw tears trickling down the old man's wrinkled face. Mr. West turned his dim, sightless eyes in the direction from which prayer had come and said, “Young man, I have certainly much to be thankful for.”

The young missionary was almost speechless. How could the old gentleman think of a single blessing? “What!” he stammered, “Are you thankful?”

“Yes,” old Mr. West cheerfully replied; “There are many who have always been blind, who have never seen the beautiful sunshine repelling on the river; who have never known the beauties of the flowers, the green grass, the trees, and the blue sky. But I am so thankful that I have been blind for only thirty-seven years.”

The young preacher felt ashamed of himself. When he had finished his visit and walked slowly up the narrow plank that led from the boat to the river's bank, he was a changed man. His troubles were all gone. He preached a short, terse sermon to himself as he walked the busy street— “Young man, look here. You don't have any troubles. Count your blessings; and if you are ever blue and discouraged again, just think of poor old Mr. West, and be ashamed of yourself.”

Of course you and I have troubles, but what of it? Without trials and troubles now and then, we would be spineless, weak-kneed and vacillating. The oak tree roots the deeper for the storms and the winds that blow through its branches. Stars shine the brightest on the darkest nights. Gold looks the brighter for rubbing, friction, and scouring. Spices smell the sweetest when pounded.

—selected.

Leading Captivity Captive

“Thou has ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation” (Psalm 68:18 & 19).

God hath destroyed the enemy that He may load us with benefits. He led captivity captive. The evil one came and took mankind captive. Jesus Christ came and took the armies of the evil one captive. He took captivity captive. So there is no fear to those who look up to Jesus.

Once David's wives and the wives of his followers were carried away captive while he was away. When David returned, he prayed to God and rescued the captive women and destroyed the captors. Once enemies carried away all the goods of the king of Sodom and they took Lot, Abraham's nephew, as captive. Abraham went and delivered Lot and brought back all that they had carried away. Think of Lot, how happy he would have been when he saw his uncle coming to deliver him. When Jesus Christ came He took captivity captive; our enemies are defeated. So there must be a sense of conquest in us. The final conqueror was Abraham, not Lot's captors.

Just think of how the wives of David's men would have run to their husbands who freed them. But we have not yet realized the victory we have got. We feel we will fall into temptation. Oh, we fear so much

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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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that we will fall! No, that is wrong.

“Captivity is taken captive!” The ‘prince of this world’ who had taken us prisoners is now taken up as a prisoner. A sense of mastery over human nature must be in us. Jesus conquered and so we will conquer too. He will infuse into us the same victory as we look to the Cross.

“*He loadeth us with benefits.*” What are these benefits? — Not the things of this world. These are nothing to a spiritual man. The benefits are Christ-likeness, Christ-like nature and Christ-like hope. “*Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world*” (John 16:33). That is the triumphant note of Jesus’ message.

As a Christian develops in the spirit, the Cross begins to fill his life. The Cross fills his thoughts. To get any victory he comes again to the Cross. It was at the Cross his resistance to God first broke down. It was there he got a broken spirit. There pride leaves us and the spirit of humility takes hold of us. It begins with a sense of unworthiness. We pray, “Lord have mercy” — only mercy — only grace — there are no merits in us for a plea. At the Cross all our righteousness becomes filthy rags.

These are the benefits we are loaded with. First the sense of unworthiness and then the forgiveness of sins and then the sense of victory. “He has overcome and so I will overcome.” Why? — Because His nature has come into us. We are made into spiritual men to exercise God’s power.

The Jews ate bitter herbs with unleavened bread. You will eat bitter herbs but they will not make your life bitter. They ate bitter herbs, but that very night they marched out of Egypt and their bitter bondage ended. Your sorrow at the thought of your sin may be very bitter. You may even come close to despair. But Egypt ends there. The victorious march from Pharaoh’s kingdom begins.

Every thought of God — Every thought that God brings into your heart is a great blessing to you and to those around you. As you go into His presence His thoughts take hold of you, your will is strengthened and your affections are directed. You are being shaped into a great personality. Let the Lord be your standard. That will keep you humble and make you aim higher and higher.

No man who goes into His presence early in the morning and studies the Bible

will be satisfied with himself. Do not compare yourself with others and be satisfied. Wherever you go remember that the first hour of the day belongs to God, and you must be humbled there. The more you are hammered by the Word into His likeness, the more your love is strengthened like the Love of God. Then your healing and soul-winning ministry extends.

Moses’ word became power. He once trusted in his fist and was a murderer but now he becomes the mouthpiece of God. He is loading us with benefits. God is making

you a magnetic personality which does not repel a sinner but attracts him.

“Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee; and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out; and I will get them praise

and fame in every land where they have been put to shame.” (Zephaniah 3:19). Do not be afraid if people mock you, disgrace you and drive you out. You have your rights with God. He will load you with His benefits. One day the Lord will fill you with His Spirit and sanctify you and send you out. You will not fail. Be loaded with the benefits of God at the foot of the Cross on your knees with the open Bible before you. A man with the mind of Christ is the strongest and the greatest man.

—Late Mr. N. Daniel

“There is no fear to those who look up to Jesus.”

A Providential Escape

At Ediciones Las Americas, the Spanish publishing centre for Central American Mission, three Mexicans held key staff positions... administrative manager, editor and salesman.

One Friday morning Saul, the salesman overslept and would miss the 6 o’clock bus from Mexico City. That meant arriving in Puebla thirty minutes late for work!

He caught the 6:30 bus, but only a short distance out of Mexico City it pulled over to the side of the road and stopped. The passengers were told it would be necessary to

wait a while because the 6 o’clock bus had been involved in a serious accident.

Thinking of his two co-workers who always took that bus, Saul ran to the tragic scene. He was horrified. A large trailer truck had jumped the freeway median, crushing the bus against another trailer truck. Everyone in the three vehicles was dead. Saul returned to his bus mourning the loss of his two friends.

In mental agony he arrived at the office wondering how to break the news to us. The first person who greeted him was Jose, the administrative manager! Saul was speechless! It was like seeing someone resurrected from the dead. How had Jose missed the bus? It was simple. Jose and his wife had dinner with me the night before and decided to spend the night in Puebla.

In a choked voice Saul said, “And Adolfo?” He ran toward the editorial office. Could it be? He felt limp when he was convinced that it really was the editor sitting at his desk. Adolfo had awakened at 3 a.m. and felt an urge to spend time in prayer. Unable to sleep, and thinking of the unfinished work on his desk, Adolfo took the 5:30 bus to Puebla. He missed the accident! Coincidence? Christians know “*the steps of good men are directed by the Lord*” (Psalm 37:23). Jose, Adolfo and Saul, three men who narrowly missed death, also knew “*My times are in thy hands*” (Psalm 31:15)

—selected

Say What?

“LORD, WHO SHALL ABIDE IN THY TABERNACLE? WHO SHALL DWELL IN THY HOLY HILL? HE THAT WALKETH UPRIGHTLY, AND WORKETH RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND SPEAKETH THE TRUTH IN HIS HEART.”

PSALMS 15:1,2

ers, one at a time, crept on his back over to the safety of the other building.

Now the crowd waited with bated breath to see the little hero save himself. But his strength was waning fast and the long-taut muscles were too weary to make much further effort. The horror-stricken crowd saw the brave hands lose their grip and then the body hurled to the ground below. Gathering around the mangled form, they saw the eyelids flutter open for a moment, revealing a depth of thought beyond their years. They heard a last request from the pallid lips. "Take care of my little brothers." With that uttering the noble spirit fled.

The great display of human love, which melted many hearts that tragic night, reminds us of God's unmerited and immeasurable love to us. Such love had its rich source in the heart of God and found glorious expression in the seeming tragedy but final triumph of the Cross of Christ when "*once in the end of the age He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself*" (Heb 9:26).

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10).

Negatively, we lacked love to God. Positively, we were sinners. "*But God commendeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*" (Romans 5:8)

Love begets love, and we who have put our trust in the finished work of Christ, when He bore our sins on the Cross, can say, "*We love him because He first loved us.*"

— selected

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unclean, the wreckers of homes and the breakers of families are lauded as the most fashionable in the land. Alas what blindness such a preoccupation with the flesh produces.

Social kissing is a most unwholesome development at parties and social gatherings, for the ballroom is already the moral graveyard of many a deflowered damsel and divorced dame.

It's unpardonable and wilful blindness, which neglects the family and stays out late, while the children cry themselves to sleep, night after night. No wonder so many rebels; drug addicts and anarchists fill the land. The broken home, produces an unceasing flow of candidates for the prison, the nervous disease hospitals and the funeral homes.

A blind leader or preacher multiplies the number of widows, orphans and the heart-broken in the community.

When you go to the Lord Jesus, He opens your blind eyes and you see your own sinfulness for the first time. A recent letter to me said, "There is no sinner like me, there never was and there never will be anyone so wicked as I." Now that is the light of Jesus. Why should Jesus die for us if we were all such good and gracious persons? No, if you still think you are a very good man or woman, you are deceiving yourself.

I notice that men, who in company are extremely gracious to their wives, snap at them at their dinner tables, threaten them with awful imprecations. That is simply your wicked heart. And what an awful blindness it is not to know your own heart.

I have to deal with murderers. Today I was reviewing the case of a murderer who had beheaded his wife in public. The Lord Jesus opened his eyes in prison when the Word of God was preached by some of our men. I have met another murderer who simply could not see that murder was sin. He was that blind. Yet, Jesus opened his blind eyes too.

The kid-loving sinner, with the practised smile and the pleasing manners, is the one, whose eyes it seems most difficult to open. He believes doggedly and hypocritically in the old myth which says, "We're basically very good people and we are all the time improving." No. It is sheer blindness which makes you think that you are pretty good. That's what I used to say by way of bluff. But when Jesus opened my eyes, I saw my wretchedness for the first

time and my eyes were opened too to look at the cross of Jesus. The light and love, which shone on me from the cross of Jesus, removed the veil, and the darkness from my heart.

Then God opens a man's eyes "*to see wondrous things in His word*" (Ps. 119:18). When you study the Bible before you go to work, God begins to speak to you and opens to you His loving plans for you.

Running to seek the help of astrologers or engaging in idolatrous practices fill your soul with darkness, which makes prayer impossible. The living God will dispel that blindness which makes it so hard for you to see Jesus. All over Europe too you can see this blindness, which keeps men from Jesus. Money and acquiring things they understand only too well but only a Historical Jesus is known to them, not the Living Christ.

Dear listener let Jesus open your eyes and your whole life will then become so beautiful and meaningful. I am praying that you too will say with the blind man of St. John Ch.9, "*Whereas I was blind, now I see.*"

—Joshua Daniel

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