

Christ is Victor

SEP/OCT 2006

“Forgiving One Another”

This story tells about identical twin boys. The boys' lives became inseparably intertwined. From the first they dressed alike, went to the same schools, did all the same things. In fact, they were so close that neither ever married, but they returned home and took over the family business when their father died. Their relationship was pointed to as a model of creative collaboration.

One morning a customer came into the store and made a small purchase. The brother who waited on him put the dollar bill on top of the cash register and walked to the front door with the man.

Sometime later he remembered what he had done, but when he went to the cash register, the dollar was gone. He asked his brother if he had seen the money and put it in the register, and the brother replied that he knew nothing of the money in question.

“That’s funny,” said the other, “I distinctly remember placing the bill here on the register, and no one else has been in the store since then.”

Had the matter been dropped at that point—a mystery involving a tiny amount of money—nothing would have come of it. However, an hour later, this time with a noticeable hint of suspicion in his voice, the brother asked again, “Are you sure you didn’t see that dollar bill and put it into

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“Understanding Your Own Heart”

“And if you salute your brethren only what do you more than the others? Do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” (Matthew 5: 47, 48)

We do not obey God’s word in our conduct. If we only salute our friends, well, anybody does that. But if we love our enemies and salute strangers and those who will not salute us, then we are the children of our Father who is in heaven. Someone told me, “When that person sees me, she turns her head away.” It is a terrible thing. Such characteristics and actions are contrary to the Spirit of Christ. What a dreadful thing! Worshipping the same Father, but keeping hardness in the heart or some hard feeling! We must be very much aware of our imperfections. A true Christian sees his own imperfections first.

A world-famous violinist said, “When I make a mistake even by the slightest misplacement of a finger on the strings and it produces a false note, even if my note is a little false, I know it. If I am out of practice for two days, then my family knows it and if I am out of practice for a little while more, the whole world knows it.” When the whole world knows about your imperfections and yet you do not know about that, do not call yourself a Christian. It is simply ludicrous! You must know first where you have departed from the Spirit of Christ and that what you are doing is wrong. Your heart must know it first. Otherwise you will

lose touch with God.

When there is a situation where others know about the wrong-doing and yet the preachers and leaders do not know about that, it is very serious. As a preacher, I must know my failure or wrong-doing first. I must humble myself first, and then only show the way to others. That is why the Bible does not speak so much of the sins of the people. It speaks of the sins of the kings first, the

You must know first where you have departed from the Spirit of Christ and that what you are doing is wrong. Your heart must know it first.

princes next, or the prophets. Yes, if you have taken care of that, you have taken care of everything. Then revival will spread and increase all around you. This is all that God taught me from my youth: “Take care of your heart; do not worry about your public performance. That is immaterial. Take care of your heart first.” That is all. I have always been doing that.

“Be ye perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” You and I cannot say that we are perfect. There is a measure given there—“as your Heavenly Father.” So do not compare yourself with somebody else and say, “I am fine, I am a good fellow and I am better than a lot of these other fellows, etc.” What is the width of the Heavenly Father’s love? “That you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for he maketh the sun to rise on the evil and on the good and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust.”

Gujarat is one of the most advanced industrial states of India. If you go to Bombay, you will find that people in Bombay do not like the Gujarathis. There is a lot of envy and busi-

ness rivalry because the Gujarathis are the top industrialists. This is true of many parts of the world- greed, envy and rivalry come into full play where money is involved. God showered His blessings upon the people of Gujarat, but when He saw their stubborn refusal to acknowledge Him and their hatred towards the church, God gave them a little shaking. He has no pleasure in the death of a sinner. No, not at all. But when God sends His rain upon the just and the unjust, it shows the width of His love. He says, *“I will give them a chance.”*

So some of you who appear to prosper, do not imagine that it is a mark of God’s special favour. No, I do not think that prosperity is a mark of God’s great favour. If you bring suffering and overcoming real barriers into a man’s life, his character gets purified. There will be a completely different quality in that man’s life. I never got anything cheap. God never gives you more money than you can use for building His kingdom. I therefore always say, *“This is God’s money, let me be very careful in the use of it.”* So I can walk through a shopping area or through the alluring array in an airport, without desiring to buy anything. I can go to a city famous for its shopping and not even step into a shop. I have an overwhelming responsibility given to me by the Saviour to take care of Eternal souls.

When the big hall at our headquarters was built, we did not have the money for the foundation of even one column. Good! We did not ask for money from anybody. We lifted up our hands to the Heavenly Father and cried to Him for more faith. That is the way I have worked all these years- not with money in my pocket. Otherwise it is no work of God and it does not please God. When we contrive to build God’s kingdom with money and concrete and not with faith, it is impossible to please God.

If you do not acknowledge the Giver, you will be subject to His judgment. God would say, *“I gave you so much, but you gave nothing back to me; you did not love your neighbour, you did not send out missionaries, you just sat comfortably.”* God does not make a church a place of comfort. That is the modern concept of the church. But the church of Jesus Christ consists of people who have sacrificed, who have denied themselves, who bear the wounds and scars of persecution and spiritual warfare. Yes, such are the members of the Body of Christ.

Look at all the crosscurrents today- the drive for money and the unspeakable greed which is relentlessly whipping people to an early grave. People are made after degrees. They must have degree upon degree to get anywhere in life, they feel. Young people talk, think and plan money. They say, *“If I go there, I will get more money.”* All that utterance does not speak of the Heavenly Father. God simply does not figure in such thoughts or motivations. Somewhere you have got your eyes completely off Jesus. Money-ridden minds will never seek spiritual excellence or a closer walk with God.

On Sunday mornings we try to get back on focus. But the word of God will not stick in your heart when the desire to keep up with the world dominates your thinking. The filth of the television is allowed to flood your personality. Would you ever have the spirit of prayer while you hanker after shows and entertainment? Will the Word of God stick in your heart when you scarcely hunger or thirst for righteousness? Will your Heavenly Father appear attractive? No. The filth of the television and the cinema will allure you. When finally difficulties and problems arise, you focus only on those difficulties and cannot see the ‘All-sufficient Saviour’.

I find some people have such minds, that they cannot turn away from their problems.

You have to look at your Heavenly Father. He is the Author of your Salvation and He is the Finisher. All of us are racing towards the finish-line. I do not know how we are going to fare at the finish-line. The finish-line is everything in a race. Everybody’s eyes are on the finish-line. The entire ranking is by the finish line. What is the finish line? We should not leave this world groaning and moaning. We must leave this world with a roar of ‘Hallelujahs’. It would be terrible if we have to leave this earth whimpering like lost kittens. That is not the way to go. Doesn’t an author desire to finish His work? Of course, the Lord wants to finish and perfect that which He has begun. I do not know why we digress so much. When I am travelling to a destination, I do not like to stop even for a cup of tea because five minutes will be gone. I must be at the meeting on time. Friends try to stop me and say, “We have got this and that ready for you.” Very often, I politely refuse and I go straight to the platform.

God gives us direction. If you and I are going to stop here and stop there, gaze here and look there, we will never cross that finish-line in triumph. It is part of our nature to dilly-dally. You have heard of the hare and the tortoise. The hare felt that it was time to take a nap because the tortoise was far behind. But what happened? Who hit the finish-line first? The tortoise. Some of you may appear as the tortoise, you are very disappointed that you are very slow. But it is good to be disappointed with ourselves. I know plenty of that. Yes, I have good reason for that too. When you come to the cross and look at the Lord Jesus and see in Him the perfect image of your Heavenly Father, you will say, *“Alas, I am not like Him.”* Oh, may God help us!

— Joshua Daniel

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“Prophesy to Dry Bones”

“Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.” (Ezekiel 37:12)

Prophesy is the word of the omniscient God who knows and understands all things. Prayer is nothing but the contact of the finite mind with the infinite mind. If prayer is only for material things, it is no prayer at all. Those who pray for material things are beggars in the kingdom of God. To possess the mind of God, the wisdom of God and the nature of Christ is the real wealth of a Christian.

When we come to Jesus, He makes us a unified personality. When sin reigns in us there is a divided personality which causes us sorrow and worry and unhappiness. Bones by themselves cannot function to do any good. They may of course clatter and make a noise. A man who is not in live touch with God does not know himself. Unconverted people in churches and assemblies are dry bones who clash among themselves.

“The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly.” (Proverbs 20:27) “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.” (1 Corinthians 2:11) The candle of the Lord lights up the heart of man. When a man knows himself, he is broken. Nothing that is born of man is acceptable before God. But those who are broken in the sight of God are taught of God.

“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts

are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord.” (Isaiah 55:7, 8) Only those who constantly contact the divine spirit can understand this. Prayer is digging into you subconscious. There are many thoughts which are not of God, which are dangerous and you are about to act on them. Lot had dangerous thoughts within himself and he gave no time to wait on God and get them corrected. Abraham also had dangerous thoughts which took him to Egypt, but again he contacted God who said, *“... Walk before me, and be thou perfect.”*

God showed the prophet that the Israelites were dry bones. Can God take hold of any one of us to prophesy to dry bones? Can you prophesy in your own home? The thought of God is eternal. Those who have the thoughts of God are powerful. But God cannot put His thoughts in us to stay till we are broken and know that there is nothing good in us. Those who live in live contact with the divine Spirit will one day prophesy. Divided personalities and churches will be united. We want prophets today who can say, *“Thus saith the Lord.”* The Israelites were in captivity. They had forsaken God. They wanted to do away with the prophet. The enemy came in according to the prophet’s word and destroyed the land and took away the people captive. The churches are in despair now. They did not believe the word of God. They gave their own interpretation to the Word.

When the Spirit of God comes upon a man or woman, such a person will be a great blessing to the church. God asked the prophet to prophesy to the dry bones. What can words do? No, they are not just words. It is the Word that created the earth. The word of God is creative energy. It destroys evil and creates the likeness of God, through the Cross and the resurrection of Jesus. We are going to be restored to our original likeness of God. That is why Jesus said, *“Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect.”* When we die to self we will love the will of God, though we may not understand it. In the beginnings of this work, tears used to

come into my eyes as I used to think, *“What about my future? What will happen to this work?”* I had heard the voice of God and had obeyed it. As the Lord taught me I followed. Are you a ‘God-spoke-to’ person? Then you will prophesy to dead bones and they will live.

There is a great army in the world for God’s work and we must bring it together. God will do it but let us be true. *“And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord.” (Ezekiel 37:14)* God used one young man who was true to God and in live-touch with the divine spirit to work out His plan. It was his influence that brought the Israelites back. God said He would unite them, as the Israelites were two nations for a long time.

“And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they and their children, and their children’s children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them...” (Ezekiel 37:25,26) God is going to do great things. Only you must dig deep and remove what is not of God in you and continue to follow the Lord. All may forsake you: but you just continue to listen to His voice and obey.

— N. Daniel

**REALITY
CHECK!**

**“IN THEE, O
LORD, DO I PUT
MY TRUST: LET ME
NEVER BE PUT TO
CONFUSION.”**

PSALM 71:1

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the register?" The other brother was quick to catch the note of accusation, and flared back in defensive anger.

This was the beginning of the first serious breach of trust that had ever come between these two. It grew wider and wider. Every time they tried to discuss the issue, new charges and countercharges got mixed into the brew, until finally things got so bad that they were forced to dissolve their partnership. They ran a partition down the middle of the store and turned what had once been a harmonious partnership into an angry competition. In fact, that business became a source of division in the whole community, each twin trying to enlist allies for himself against the other. This warfare went on for more than twenty years.

Then one day a car with an out-of-state license plate parked in front of the store. A well-dressed man got out, went into one of the sides, and inquired how long the merchant had been in business in that location. When the man learned it was more than twenty years, the stranger said, "Then you are the one with whom I must settle an old score."

"Some twenty years ago," he said, "I was out of work, drifting from place to place, and I happened to get off a boxcar in your town. I had absolutely no money and had not eaten for three days. As I was walking down the alley behind your store, I looked in and saw a dollar bill on the top of the cash register. Everyone else was in front of the store. I had been raised in a Christian home and I had never before in all my life stolen anything, but that morning I was so hungry, I gave in to the temptation, slipped through the door, and took that dollar bill. That act has weighed on my conscience ever since, and I finally decided that I would never be at peace until I came back and faced up to that old sin and made amends. Would you let me now replace that money and pay you whatever is appropriate for the damage?"

The stranger was surprised to see the old man shaking his head in dismay and beginning to weep. When that brother had gotten control of himself, he took the stranger by the arm and said, "I want you to go next door and repeat the same story you have just told me." The stranger did, only this time there were two old men, who

looked remarkably alike, both weeping uncontrollably. But alas, how many precious years have been lost due to bitterness in their hearts towards each other!

"Follow peace with all men..., Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled." (Hebrews 12:14)

"The Devil's Best Tool"

Once upon a time- so the story goes- the devil decided it was time for him to retire. He planned to sell all his tools of trade- malice, hatred, jealousy, lust, envy, sloth- and arranged them, price tags and all, in the most attractive manner possible.

One of the devil's tools was a seemingly harmless, wedge-shaped object. But it was the highest priced of all the items on display. Moved with curiosity, someone approached the devil and asked what he called this particular tool.

The devil's smile became a smirk of cunning. "That's discouragement," he replied.

"But why is it priced so high?" his interrogator persisted.

"Because," answered the devil, "it is the most useful tool I have ever possessed. I can do more with discouragement than with any of the others. With it I can pry open a man's conscience, and once inside it's no trick at all to get him to do anything I want.

"And though you'd hardly believe it," the devil added, "very few even suspect that it belongs to me."

No sensible person expects life to be a bed of roses, but for all that, a tendency to discouragement seems to be one of the most prevalent of human traits. Sometimes, when troubles and disappointments seem to pile up, when the future seems dark and foreboding, there is a great temptation to break down and confess defeat. It is at just such times that the utmost efforts should be made to shake off the weight of discouragement. Otherwise, despair, which is the ultimate defeat, may seize upon the soul and destroy it.

The best antidote to discouragement is trust in God. God is never blind to the afflictions of His creatures. While He permits us to suffer, for His own good reasons, He never allows the burden to become too heavy for any individual shoulder. Discouragement, there, is merely a sign that we have not kept close to Him as we should; that we have, in fact, neglected Him and refused to accept His offers of help.

Every life will have its share of discouragement. But discouragement will never overcome a soul, which keeps its vision fixed on the eternal reality of God and His truths. Paul sounded a challenge to all when he declared that nothing on earth- grief, pain, temptation or disappointment- could ever separate him from the love of God. The love of God remains the impenetrable armour against which the devil will strike in vain with the weapon of discouragement.

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." (Ephesians 6:11)

— Selected

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Sunday Morning Worship at 10:00 am at:
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 46200 West Ten Mile Rd.
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University of Michigan Mondays 7:00 pm
 Angell Hall, Room G-144
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Fort Wayne, IN: 1090 AM (WFCV) Sat. 4:00 pm
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