

Christ is Victor

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“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!” (Romans 11:33).

Without any doubt, we are living in a superficial and artificial age. It is all tinsel, veneer and glittering chrome. In the event of any disaster or accident, all that remains are only bits and pieces and an unrecognizable mass of twisted steel. But most people stake everything on the short-lived glow and glitter of their earthly possessions.

Unfortunately, this shallow veneer has overtaken many churches too. Most of the preachers and churches today preach a conversion which requires no repentance. It hurts to dig deep, to uncover the wicked motives that rule one's life and confess hidden sins. It is something which human nature revolts against. We hate to be exposed, to be searched to the depths of our hearts. But this is what the Lord Jesus does. Exposure and diagnosis are essential for treatment.

You never try to mislead your doctor by stating symptoms which do not exist. You want to be as exact as possible in narrating the symptoms in order to help the doctor

Ruth Bell Graham vividly remembers September 2, 1933. She was thirteen. Her father, a missionary surgeon in China, and her mother were sending her to boarding school in what is now Pyongyang, North Korea. For Ruth, it was a brutal parting, and she earnestly prayed she would die before morning. But dawn came,

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“Get right with God”

to locate the problem.

St Paul cries: “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!”

Yes, there are depths in Christ, depths in purity, power and perfection. It only reveals our shallow desire when we look around and see the state of affairs of Christians today. The early disciples were men who could face any situation with deep assurance that their risen Lord would deliver them through and through. Jesus was more than adequate for them. Such was their faith and they were more than conquerors in the midst of an idolatrous and immoral society.

Christ is adequate even today. His promises are enough for you. As you get deeper into the Word of God and the riches in Christ, your heart is thrilled with a new vision and hope. You are right there in the mine shaft and the cable car plunges you deeper and deeper into the solid veins of gold in the quartz around you. It is all yours. He is your wisdom. He is your salvation. He is your sanctification. In Jesus Christ you have all these riches. He gave Himself for us holding nothing back.

“Put your name in it”

leaving her prayers unanswered, and she gripped her bags and trudged toward the riverfront. She was leaving all that was loved and familiar: her Chinese friends, the missionaries, her parents, her home, her memories. The Nagasaki Maru carried her slowly down the Whangpoo River into the Yangtze River and onto the East China Sea.

A week later she was settling into her spartan dormitory. Waves of homesickness pounded her like a churning surf. Ruth kept busy by day, but evenings were harder. She would bury her head in her pillow and cry herself to sleep, night after night, week after week. She fell ill, and in the infirmary she read through the

My father was a man of great spiritual depth and he sought depth in others. In his lifetime he was enabled by God to bring literally thousands into the deep experience of conversion. Nearly all of them learned to pray and cultivated the habit of getting alone for prayer every day. No wonder they were mightily used of God in healing the sick and in casting out the demons. The Word of God prevailed over all the works of darkness.

On the other hand, the shallow Christians are always characterized by the light-hearted way in which they speak of deep men of God. The very Son of God was not spared from criticism. They called Him as a wine-bibber, friend of sinners and Beelzebub. They belittled Him as the son of the carpenter. But Jesus steadfastly set His face towards Jerusalem, where He must suffer and die on the cross.

Now, tear off the old paper and scrape away the thin veneer with which you disguised your true nature. Come to the cross with true brokenness. Call upon the Lord Jesus for a new life. There are depths of His love and riches which are still unexplored.

—Joshua Daniel

Psalms, finding comfort in Psalm 27:10: “When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take care of me.”

The hurt and fear and doubt persisted. Finally, in desperation, she went to her sister Rosa, also enrolled in Pyongyang. “I don't know what to tell you to do,” Rosa replied matter-of-factly, “unless you take some verse and put your own name in it. See if that helps?” Ruth picked up her Bible and turned to a favorite chapter, Isaiah 53, and put her name in it: “But He was wounded for Ruth's transgressions; by His stripes Ruth is healed.” Her heart leaped, and the healing began.

—Selected

“Call on the name of the Lord”

Danny Velasco worked as a successful freelance hairdresser and make-up artist in photo studios around the world for nearly forty years. In his early thirties, he moved to Paris because he wanted to be at the centre of where fashion was. Within two months of being in Paris, he got his first cover of Vogue magazine. Subsequently, his career exploded! He had as much money as he wanted to spend on drugs and that now included using cocaine followed by heroin.

One day, Danny was on a photo shoot in New York City and a model, Wanda, began to talk to him about Jesus. “God loves you,” she told him. To Danny, this young female was a religious fanatic; he did not have much to say to her and just let her talk. Before she left, she said, “Hey Danny, do you mind if I pray for you?” In the studio, she took his hands and began to pray out loud. Danny had never been around anyone praying out loud and thought she was nuts! Before she walked out, Wanda said, “Look, you know you’re in trouble. I know who you are, I’ve seen your work and magazines for years, and I know you work with all these famous celebrities but you’re in big trouble. So I just want to let you know that the day you call on the name of the Lord He’s [going to] set you free.”

“Oh really?” replied Danny. “You don’t understand, I’ve gone way too far.”

“Oh, no, no, there [are] no hopeless cases with Jesus.”

“Okay, whatever, but listen, I will never call on the name of the Lord. That won’t happen, and I won’t ever come to your church.”

“I just want you to remember that,” she said.

One of Danny’s contracts was for a

clothing manufacturing company and they were shooting in the Caribbean. After Danny overdosed on heroin, he was sent back to America and the company pulled his contract. Yet he did not care; all he wanted to do was shoot dope. So one day he pulled up a garbage can between his legs and began to cut up everything that had his name on it—including his passport and driver’s license. He put the keys on the table, walked out, closed the door behind him, and never went back. He began to live on the streets.

Day-to-day existence on the streets of New York meant waking up, being sick, and wanting drugs. Danny had gone down to weighing around 108 pounds and developed hepatitis A, B, and C. Every once in a while on the streets he would go to a pay phone and call Wanda: “Look, I need some money.” She would say, “Well, if you would come by the church today, we have choir practice tonight.” She could give him some money then. Wanda never gave up on Danny.

Danny did not know it at the time but Wanda had a whole team of friends praying for Danny, and they would pray for him in prayer meetings where there were thousands gathered together crying out to God. They would pray and pray for him.

Danny started to develop a lot of phobias living on the street. He began to hear voices in his head, constantly accusing him and telling him he would mess up. Another voice would start up and just curse and spew out filthy language. A third voice would continuously laugh. One day when riding the trains, a man, a drug addict, said, “You look like you’re dying. There’s a hospital next stop. You should go to the hospital.”

Oh yeah, maybe I will,” said Danny. He did not want to die on the street and went into the Emergency department. When he woke up in a hospital bed, he was lying in his own vomit. All the voices were screaming in his head.

There was one moment where Danny heard a sweet little voice in the midst of all that craziness and it said, “The day you call on the name of the Lord, He’s going to set you free.” It was at that moment that Danny cried out to God: “Jesus, help me. Save me. You’re my only hope. I have no other hope.” It was as if the Spirit of God just swept into that hospital room; it was as if He were all around Danny and in him, healing him, and loving him, and changing him. The experience was overwhelming. Immediately all the voices in his head stopped—and never returned. The fears and phobias dropped away from him.

When Danny was in rehabilitation, he began to devour God’s Word like a hungry man feasting on the Word of God. He also wrote to Wanda and told her what had happened. She replied with three big letters: “WOW.”

What blew Danny away is that God goes so much further than we ever dare to ask for. God gave him a new life, stood him up before thousands of people so that others would know that they too could obtain mercy. It was like he was God’s trophy that he wished to show off to the world and say, “I can do this in somebody’s life.”

“And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21).

—Danny Velasco’s testimony is available to watch online

REALITY CHECK!

“God ... now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man [Jesus Christ] whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead” (Acts 17:30-31).

“Come now, and let us reason together,” says the LORD, “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool” (Isaiah 1:18).

“True worship”

“Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment” (John 12:3).

Here is a worship going on at a dinner time. The sister of a man raised from the grave had made a great feast for Jesus. It was a great celebration of the triumph of faith. A home that listened to the Word of God which came from such perfect lips could not help becoming a home as could believe a man four days in the grave could rise again. They were full of gratitude in their hearts. Mary took the costly ointment which had been preserved in the family to be converted into money at the time of an emergency. She brought it and brake it. Why? She had found the Savior. She

was full of faith. It was an act of worship, praise, honor and adoration. Everyone felt the impact of that worship. She belonged to the Kingdom of God. But there was one present who was not at all happy. He belonged to the kingdom of Caesar. He stepped out of the Kingdom of God into Caesar’s dark kingdom. He did not know the possibility of faith. He only looked at the purse and how much he could pilfer from it. He was still in darkness and sin, while a man in Caesar’s service reached out to belong to the Kingdom of God.

The Centurion definitely belonged to the Kingdom of God. He had so much affection and concern for a servant. This is typical of the Kingdom of God. He certainly did not belong to the kingdom of Caesar. He could see how much was

possible through faith. Judas was dead as a door nail to faith. He could not believe that without selling Jesus he could square up his financial affairs. Thirty pieces of silver could bring him above his trouble, he thought.

Men who belong to the kingdom of Caesar calculate everything through money and are no good for God. Do you believe that God can use you? Are you growing in faith? Have you risen above the kingdom of Caesar, where all calculations are made in money? Have you stepped out into the Kingdom of God, where the limited man becomes an unlimited being by believing in God?

—N. Daniel

“Delivered from alcohol”

Testimony of Mark Rydinski

When I was young, I spent my life foolishly, though I thought I was very smart. I thought it was great to meet with my friends every night after work and have a few drinks. Of course, my wife didn’t like me doing this, because I usually came home none too steady on my feet.

In 1972, we gave our lives to the Lord Jesus Christ. As new Christians, we didn’t know what to do. So as a new believer, I did what was normal for me. I’d come home from work, and my car had a habit of turning into this one tavern. I couldn’t control the steering wheel anymore. Because of my commitment to Christ, I realized that what I was doing was wrong, but I didn’t know how to stop.

The fact was drinking was such a normal part of my life that it was hard for me to see anything wrong in it. When I was a youngster, my dad operated three saloons in South Bend, Indiana. So

drinking was something that was part of our lives. In fact, that’s how my dad made a living. And I didn’t see anything wrong with it.

But then, the Lord had a hold of me, and I got to feeling so guilty every time that I would have a drink. Even at home, I found so many hiding places for my bottle. But my wife didn’t like me sneaking drinks, and she said, “Mark, why don’t you just take that bottle and set it here on the cupboard here in the kitchen? You don’t have to go downstairs sneaking drinks. I know you’re drinking.”

But I was ashamed. It bothered me, but yet I couldn’t stop. I tried on my own. There was no way I could quit. My pastor even tried to help me, but I guess he didn’t have the right combination.

And then in the year 1978, we heard that a missionary, Reverend Daniel, was coming to our church. For me, I wasn’t one of those fellows that liked to go to church at night. Sunday was fine, but any

extra time, that wasn’t my cup of tea. But anyway, Rev. Daniel came and for some reason or other, no matter how much I drank throughout the day, I still attended the meetings at the church on the week nights. There was something that Rev. Daniel was saying that got to me. His words were like a magnet; the Lord was pulling me there every night.

At the end of the week, Rev. Daniel talked to our pastor, and said, “There is a brother in the congregation that needs help. If you can arrange a meeting of some sort, I would very much appreciate it.” So my pastor asked if it will be all right if Rev. Daniel could come over to our house. Well, we liked to have company and said that would be fine.

So when Rev. Daniel came in that evening with our pastor, my wife offered him a 7-Up or a cold drink. But he said, “No sister. I’m here on business.” And he

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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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“Turn that over to me”

The career of missionary E. Stanley Jones, who died in 1973, was nearly cut short by chronic worry. When he had first arrived in India, Jones wore himself out, working and worrying. “I was suffering so severely from brain fatigue and nervous exhaustion,” he later wrote, “that I collapsed, not once but several times.” Aboard the ship returning to America, he collapsed again and the doctor put him to bed. After a year’s rest he attempted to return to India, but became a bundle of nerves on the return trip and arrived in Bombay a broken man. His colleagues warned him that any attempt to continue ministering in such a state of anxious care would be fatal.

While praying one night, groping in emotional darkness, Jones seemed to

hear a Voice ask him, “Are you yourself ready for this work to which I have called you?”

“No, Lord,” replied Jones, “I am done for. I have reached the end of my resources.”

“If you will turn that over to Me and not worry about it,” the Voice seemed to say, “I will take care of it.”

Jones answered, “Lord, I close the bargain right here”. A great sense of peace closed in over Stanley Jones, a rush of abundant life that seemed to sweep him off his feet. His energy returned, his enthusiasm bubbled over and he plunged back into his work with a vitality he had never before known. Jones went on to spend a lifetime of ministry in India,

writing numerous books, and ministering to multitudes around the world. He later wrote, “This one thing I know: my life was completely transformed and uplifted that night... when at the depth of my weakness and depression, a voice said to me: ‘If you will turn that over to Me and not worry about it, I will take care of it,’ and I replied, ‘Lord, I close the bargain right here’.”

“Cast your burden on the Lord and He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved”; “Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you” (Psalm 55:22 and 1 Peter 5:7).

Worry is the interest we pay on tomorrow’s troubles.

—E. Stanley Jones

“Delivered from alcohol”

meant it too! Then he said to me, “I understand you have a problem.”

“Yes,” I said, “I have a drinking problem. I’d like to stop, but I can’t.”

And he said, “Well, there must be something in your life, between you and the Lord, that’s holding you back. We’ve got to find out what it is.” So Rev. Daniel took me down to the pea patch to talk privately. Eventually it came out that I had been a bartender, and he said to me, “Have you asked these families for forgiveness for the amount of alcohol that you gave these fellows that go to the bar? Have you ever asked to be forgiven?”

I said, “Ask the families for forgiveness? Joshua, there’s no way. Most of the people I didn’t even know. There’s nothing I can do about it.”

He said, “Did you ever ask God to forgive you?”

I said, “No. Not really.”

He said, “Would you like to get down on your knees and talk to God and ask Him to forgive you?”

REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE

So that night I got down on my knees and asked the Lord to forgive me for being a bartender and for drinking like I was doing. And before I had got off my knees, I could feel something working through my system, completely changing me. You talk about instant coffee, well I was instantly free from drink. From that moment on, I had no taste for it. Even the presence of alcohol didn’t bother me one bit. And God watched over me.

CALLED TO SERVE!

About a year later, I went to an evening service and the Lord began speaking to me. A young man was at the church as a gospel chalk artist. He was up there drawing beautiful pictures out of the Bible, depicting stories. And, the Lord said to me, “Now, you were an artist when you were sober. When you were sober, you could draw. But when the booze would take over, you couldn’t do anything. But I know you’re clean now. I’d like to have you start a ministry as a chalk artist.”

So that happened! My wife and I had a beautiful ministry for 13 years. We went to many states, many churches, and many campgrounds. And I would draw a picture out of the Bible, and I would also give my testimony. Many times I was invited to clubs where they weren’t used to hearing the Word of God. And I’d always say, “Yes, I’d love to come to you, providing you let me give my testimony first.” So it was always agreed that I could give my testimony. That’s what I would do: give my testimony and I would draw the pictures. And we had a wonderful ministry.

When I look back over my life, I am so thankful for my beautiful wife of 57 years. And I am so thankful that the Lord freed me and gave me a chance to serve Him.

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

University Community Church.

Call (519) 978-1495

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Fort Wayne, IN: 1090 AM (WFCV) Sat. 4:00 pm

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