

Christ is Victor

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“Journey to Bethlehem”

“And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women” (Luke 1:26-28).

All religions have their own festivals, in which unrighteousness often has full play. Christians only have a few festivals. The most important of them are the birth of Christ, the death of Christ, and the Day of Resurrection. It is right that people rejoice on the day of Christ’s birth. Angels sang their songs on that day. Shepherds had set out to see Him and they saw Him and rejoiced. Wise men started out from distant lands to seek Him. They saw the babe and worshipped Him, offering their gifts.

Let us also do the same. Let us make a journey to see Jesus and turn our minds from our earthly possessions to the King of Heaven. Some of us with our worldly wisdom and education have gone far away from Him. Our gold, our frankincense, and myrrh we have locked up for ourselves. Let us set out on our spiritual quest, seeking Him to offer these unto Him. Let us seek Him who is born as King of the Jews and Lord of Heaven and Earth. Those who are highly educated have to humble themselves and make a long journey to find Him. The angels spoke to simple shepherds. Wise men saw the sign of a star and journeyed a great distance. The prophecies of the seers will speak to men.

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Christ is Victor
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“A Pioneer Christmas”

I remember a day one winter that stands out like a boulder in my life. The weather was unusually cold, our salary had not been regularly paid, and it did not meet most of our needs when it was. My husband, James, was a minister and away much of the time, traveling from one district to another. At last, none of us were decently clothed. The water gave out in the well and the wind blew through the cracks in the floor. The settlement was new, and each family was struggling for itself.

Little by little, at the time when I needed it most, my faith began to waiver. Early in life I was taught to take God at His word, and I thought my lesson was well learned. I had leaned upon the promises in dark times, until I knew as David did, “who was my fortress and my deliverer”. Now a daily prayer for forgiveness was all that I could offer.

Christmas was coming: the children always expected their presents. The ice was thick and smooth and the boys were craving for a pair of skates. Ruth, in some unaccountable way, had taken a fancy to the idea that the dolls I had made were no longer suitable; she wanted a nice large one, and insisted on praying for it. I knew it seemed impossible, but oh, I wanted to give each child its present. It seemed as if God had deserted us, but I did not tell my husband all this. He worked so earnestly and heartily. I supposed him to be as hopeful as ever. The morning before Christmas, James was called to see a sick man. I put a piece of bread for his lunch—it was the best I could do. I tried to whisper a promise as I often had, but the words died away upon my lips. I let him go without it.

That was a dark, hopeless day. When Ruth went to bed, I listened to her prayer. She asked for the last time most explicitly for her doll and for skates for her brothers. Her bright face looked so lively when she whispered to me, “You know, I think they’ll be here early in the morning, Mamma.” I sat down alone, and gave way to the bitterest tears.

Before long, James returned, chilled and exhausted. He drew off his boots. The thin stockings slipped off with them, and his feet

were red with cold. “I wouldn’t treat a dog that way, let alone a faithful servant,” I said. Then as I glanced up and saw the hard lines in his face, and the look of despair, it flashed across my mind—James had let go too. I brought him a cup of tea, feeling sick and dizzy at the very thought. He took my hand and we sat for an hour without a word. I wanted to die and meet God, and tell Him that His promises were not true; my soul was so full of rebellious despair.

There came a sound of bells, a quick stop, and a loud knock at the door. James sprang up to open it. There stood Deacon White: “A box came by express just before dark, I brought it around as soon as I could get away. Reckon it might be for Christmas. At any rate I said they shall have it tonight. Here is a turkey my wife asked me to fetch along, and these other things I believe belong to you.”

There was a basket of potatoes, and a bag of flour. Talking all the time, he hurried in the box and then with a hearty “Good night,” he rode away. Still without speaking, James found a chisel and opened the box. He drew out first a red blanket, and then we saw that beneath it, the box was full of clothing. It seemed at that moment as if Christ fastened upon me a look of reproach. James sat down and covered his face with his hands, “I can’t touch them.” He exclaimed, “I haven’t been true, just when God was trying me to see if I could hold out. Do you think I could not see how you were suffering? I had no word of comfort to offer. I know now how to preach the awfulness of turning away from God.”

“James,” I said, clinging to him, “don’t take it to heart like this. I am to blame. I ought to have helped you. We will ask Him together to forgive us.” “Wait a moment, dear, I can’t talk now,” he said. Then he went into another room. I knelt down, and my heart broke. In an instant all the darkness, all the stubbornness, rolled away. Jesus came again and stood before me, with the loving word, “Daughter!”, and sweet promises of tenderness and joy filled my soul. I was so lost in praise and gratitude that I forgot everything else. I don’t know how long it was

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before James came back, but he too had found peace. “Now my dear wife,” he said, “let us thank God together,” and he then poured out words of praise, Bible words—for nothing else could express our thanksgiving.

We piled on some fresh logs, lighted two candles, and began to examine our treasure. We drew out an overcoat. Then there was a cloak. There was a warm suit of clothes also and three pairs of woolen hose. There was a dress for me, yards of flannel, and a pair of arctic overshoes for each of us. In mine was a slip of paper. I have it now and mean to hand it down to my children. It was Moses’ blessing to Asher, “Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.” In the gloves, evidently for James, the same dear hand had written, “I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.”

It was a wonderful box, and packed with thoughtful care. There was a suit of clothes for each of the boys, a little red gown for Ruth,

mitten, scarves, and hoods. Down in the center of the box was another box. We opened it and there was a great wax doll. I burst into tears again. James wept for joy. It was too much. We then both exclaimed again. Close behind it came two pair of skates. There were books for us to read, some of them I had wished to see, stories for the children to read, aprons and underclothing, knots of ribbon, a gay little tidy, a lovely photograph, needles, buttons, thread and actually a muff, and an envelope containing a ten-dollar gold piece.

At last we cried over everything we took up. It was past midnight, and we were faint and exhausted even with happiness. We drew up the table before the fire, and how we enjoyed our supper! And then we sat talking over our life and how sure a help God always proved.

You should have seen the children the next morning. The boys raised a shout at the sight of their skates. Ruth caught up her doll and hugged it tightly without a word; then she went to her room and knelt by her bed. When

she came back, she whispered to me, “I knew they would be there, Mamma, but I wanted to thank God just the same.” We went to the window and there were the boys out of the house already and skating on the ice with all their might.

My husband and I tried to return thanks to the church in the east that sent us the box and have tried to give thanks to God every day since. Hard times have come again and again, but we have trusted Him, dreading nothing so much as a doubt of His protecting care. Over and over again we have proved that “they that seek the Lord shall not want anything”.

We have been fooled into thinking that we have to have more and more to be happy. Maybe this true story will help all of us to be a little more content with the things we have often taken for granted.

—Selected

“JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM” CON’T ON PAGE 2

Those that sought Jesus found Him in a manger, lying on a bed of straw. The God of Heaven came as a little babe and lay in the arms of a pure and simple virgin, Mary. Kings and rich men did not have the privilege of carrying the holy babe. A holy young woman, whom angels could visit, bore this baby and nursed Him. He who filled the Heaven of Heavens came in the form of a tiny babe. To be able to limit oneself like this is the true sign of greatness. He who can humble himself is the one who can be raised up to a place of great power. The humble and broken in spirit are those whom the Lord loves. Those who can humble themselves and those who can forsake all are His children. These qualities belong to the royal priesthood. The proud cannot approach Him. They cannot worship Him.

Athaliah, the daughter of Jezebel, once reigned over Judah. She was the daughter-in-law of a righteous king, Jehoshaphat, but after her husband and son’s deaths, she killed all the royal seed and took the reins of the government into her hand. Then Jehoiada, the priest, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, hid him for six years, and anointed him king. This priest had to preserve the royal heir Joash against his wicked grandmother, Athaliah.

Satan usurped the rulership of this world. But the true King had agreed before the world began to come and overthrow the usurper. Accordingly, He came born of a virgin to die on the cross and to rise again on the third day to take the government over into His hands. How many can perceive a king in the little babe in the manger! “*Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way*” (Psalm 2:12). He was the One who drew Enoch into fellow-

ship with Himself; with the responsibilities of a family upon himself, Enoch walked with God and Jesus took Him to Himself. Even at that early time, Jesus demonstrated the power of Ascension. It was He who made Noah preach salvation for 120 years and build the Ark which represented Himself. He is the One who is going to judge the world. In those days, He directed the building of the Ark, which was the proof of His love. Today He is the God of Love and Truth who delivers us from the power of sin. He is the truth, the way, and the life.

He is the One who called Abraham, touched him and his wife in their old age, and gave them a son. He demonstrated that He is the author of life and that nothing is impossible with Him. He is the One who led Moses and overthrew Pharaoh’s army with His mighty power. He is mighty in battle. He wields the sword of righteousness. He divided the Red Sea and made His people walk through dry land.

He is the One who raised up the prophet Elijah to judge the house of Ahab—which had led Israel into Baal worship—and who answered Elijah by fire, to turn the minds of Israel away from Baal worship unto Himself. He is the One that was with Daniel in the Lion’s den and with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the midst of the fire. He is the one whose name is the great “I AM”.

Many kingdoms arose and fell. In Europe, there are some kings without a throne. The kingdoms of this earth do not last forever. But His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. The man that will not serve Him will perish. The families that will not worship Him will be broken. The kingdom that does not bow to

Him will be no more. He teaches us the way of eternal life.

The laws of an everlasting kingdom come from His lips. He is the Word that was in the beginning and the Word that was with God. The Word was made flesh and came into our midst, and spoke in human language and with a human tongue.

The Word, which came in human form, stretched forth His hand to heal the lepers and to raise the dead. God’s mighty power dwelt in Him that was born of a woman. In Him, the divine nature was perfectly reflected. He is the Eternal God who can change us into His likeness. Does He appear to be only a man? No! He is God. Let your knees bend before Him. Worship Him!

—N. Daniel

Reality Check!

FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN, UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN: AND THE GOVERNMENT SHALL BE UPON HIS SHOULDER: AND HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL, COUNSELLOR, THE MIGHTY GOD, THE EVERLASTING FATHER, THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

ISAIAH 9:6

“God’s Direction at Christmas”

“Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name Jesus” (Matthew 1:24-25).

We have departed far from the very simplicity of Christmas. All the characters that we come across at Christmas were ready to be directed, and willing to be led by God. That is our problem. We are not willing to be directed by God. I want God to direct me. I was given to so much foolishness. What would have happened to me and my life if Jesus had not taken the helm and begun to direct me from my teenage years? From that time, my trust has

been in the direction of God.

Today we have got a very strong director—money. Money has become the director of our life. Everywhere people seem to ask, “Where is the money? How can one make more money?” We have departed from the mindset which says, “Where is the Lord who directs me and the course of my family?” We don’t cry, “Where is the Lord?” Would we have a Christmas story if these people had not pursued God’s direction? We would not have the Christmas story in this form at all. They were willing to get the direction from God.

My dear friends, I was stubborn and proud, but God broke that proud will of mine at the

cross and I began to look to God for direction in every step of my life. In the Christmas story, we see these characters who were willing to be led of God’s Spirit. They were ready to obey God at any cost. That is the true spirit of Christmas—you are ready and willing to obey God and live by His direction. But we have departed far from the true spirit of Christmas today.

Joseph was an ordinary carpenter. But how willingly and readily he obeyed God! When the angel of the Lord told him, “Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost” (Matthew 1:20), he read

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“God Will Make A Way”

There is a touching story behind Don Moen’s song, “God will make a way”, which has brought great comfort and peace to many an aching heart.

Late one evening, Don Moen received a phone call with the devastating news that his wife’s sister had lost her oldest son in an automobile accident. The van in which Craig and Susan Phelps and their four sons were travelling had been struck broadside by an eighteen-wheeler truck. All four boys were thrown from the van.

While three of the sons were located by their cries, Jeremy was found lying by a fence post with his neck broken. Craig, who was a medical doctor, could do nothing to revive him. They sat out in the wilderness and waited for an ambulance.

When Don received the news of this tragedy a few hours later, his whole world came to a standstill, but on the following morning he had to fly off for a recording session which had been scheduled for several weeks. Although he knew that Craig and Susan were hurting, Don could not be with them until the day before the funeral.

During the flight the morning after the accident, God gave Don a song for them: “God will make a way where there seems to be no way. He works in ways we cannot see, He will make a way for me”. The song was based upon Isaiah 43:19: “Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert”.

This song would bring comfort to Craig and Susan when all hope seemed lost. It touched the hurt in their hearts with hope and encouragement. Don received a letter from Susan in which she quoted Isaiah 43:4: “Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.” Susan wrote, “We’ve seen the truth of the Scripture.”

When Jeremy’s friends learned that he had accepted Jesus into his life before he died, many of them began to ask their own parents how they could be assured of going to heaven when they died. The accident also prompted Craig and Susan into a deeper walk with the Lord as well as into new avenues of ministry.

Craig began teaching Sunday School at their church and Susan became active in Women’s Aglow, sharing with various groups her story and the Lord’s provision in her time of sorrow.

She has since said, “The day of the accident, when I got out of the van, even before I knew our son was dead, I knew I had a choice. I could be bitter and angry or I could totally accept God and whatever He had for us. I had to make the decision fast. I’ve seen fruit come as a result of that choice. If I had to, I’d do it again. It’s worth knowing others will go to heaven because of what happened to Jeremy. God really did make a way for us!”

*God will make a way,
Where there seems to be no way.
He works in ways we cannot see,
He will make a way for me.
He will be my guide,
Hold me closely to His side.
With love and strength
For each new day,
He will make a way,
He will make a way.*

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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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ily took the direction of God: “Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife” (verse 24). Later when the angel of the Lord told him to go to Egypt, “he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt” (Matthew 2:14). He was a man who could act on the direction of God. Everything depends upon carrying out the crucial job at the right time. The Christmas story is one of implicit obedience to the direction of God. There was no one doing his own will in the Christmas story. Everyone fitted in perfectly into the main picture. That is Christmas—finding our role in Christ and fulfilling it.

Where is the spirit of revelation today? We see how Simeon “came by the Spirit into the temple” at the precise moment at which the Baby was being brought in and he could say, “[M]ine eyes have seen thy salvation” (Luke 2:30). The characters in the Christmas story were willing to be led by God’s Spirit. Today the whole question is: “Are we willing to be led by God’s Spirit?” God will abundantly bless those who seek His direction in their lives.

The spirit of revelation is a wonderful thing.

In the revival which broke out through the labours of my father, many in the large congregation would be weeping with contrite

hearts for their sins. Since he could not deal with them individually, he would tell them, “Go alone and pray. God will speak to you.”

So the questions which we used to ask each other were, “What did the Lord speak to you? What promise did God give you? Did He tell you that your sins are forgiven?” We were not hanging loose on some feelings. Our feelings often change with the circumstances, but the promises of God will never change. The promises of God have an authority which brings hope and faith into your life.

The woman who washed the feet of Jesus was told by Jesus, “Thy sins are forgiven. . . . Thy faith has saved thee; go in peace” (Luke 7:48,50). Her sins which were many were forgiven her. Would you say that she would ever doubt those words? No. When the Saviour speaks, there comes a charge of power into you which carries you forward.

Looking to Jesus, I tell Him all the time, “Lord, I am not a builder. I cannot do a thing. I am not competent to do that. You are the Builder.” When God moves upon the large multitudes at our meetings, they repent of their sins and some of them are instantly touched by God. That is my trust. I want the touch of God. I want the revelation of God. The only question that must come to us at this Christmas time is: “What is the Lord speaking to me this Christmas?”

At the Christmas season, people talk about giving gifts to their loved ones. What is the real gift we need? I told my wife, “Please tell the children, I don’t want any Christmas gifts. All I want is that every one of them should have a humble and meek spirit.” The Bible says, “The meek will He guide in judgment: and the meek will He teach his way” (Psalm 25:9). We say: “I am so-and-so. I have done this and that.”

Dear friends, there is no bragging but only true worship and humbling at the manger. Are we going to give Jesus that worship which is acceptable to Him this Christmas? Are we going to seek for His mind, guidance, and leading this Christmas time? We need direction for the New Year. May God give you the willingness to be directed in every step of your life!

—Joshua Daniel

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

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For info on other meetings, call:

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Hear “The Lord’s Challenge” Weekly Gospel Radio

Buffalo, NY: 99.5 FM (WDCX) Sat. 8:45 am

Detroit, MI: 560 AM (WMUZ) Sat. 5:00 pm

Shortwave (Sundays 2:15 pm, EST)

WHRI 19 Metre band 15.355 MHz

Des Moines, IA: 1460 (KDMI)

Sat. 7:30 am, Sun. 11:00 pm

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

Council Bluffs, IA: 1560 AM (KLNG) Sun. 8:00am

Atlanta, GA: 86 AM (LOVE 86) Sun. 2:00 pm

Guyana: 560 AM (VoG) Sun. 6:15 pm

Toronto, Ont: 1250 AM (CJYE) Thurs 3.15 pm

“Daily Tests of Faith

There is a meaningful story of a British pastor who preached on honesty one Sunday.

The next morning, he caught the trolley to return to his church study. When the driver collected his fare, the pastor discovered that he had been given too much change in return.

As the pastor fingered the coins, you can guess what he might have thought: “It’s wonderful how God provides.” But the longer he sat, the hotter the coins became in his hand and the less he could live with himself.

When his stop came, he walked up to the front and gave the excess change back to the driver: “Here. You gave me too much change. You made a mistake.”

And the driver said, “No, it was no mistake. You see, I was in your church last night when you spoke on honesty, and I thought I would put you to the test.”

Not all checkpoints are that overt, but they usually occur when we least expect them. How do we score on the tests we face each day? The marks we get on these tests are even more important than the ones we get on our knowledge of doctrine. Our belief and our behaviour must go hand in hand. The latter gives credence to the former.

—See Charles R. Swindoll

THANKSGIVING RETREAT

NOVEMBER 29TH - DECEMBER 1ST, 2013

Community Christ Church

46200 West 10 Mile Rd.

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“ALL ARE WELCOME”

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