

***No. 18***

# *Living Water* — Issue No 18

Page

## Recent Teaching

COURAGE	Ron Gregory	3
An address at Croydon, 11 <sup>th</sup> May, 1996		

## Poetry Selection

WORTHY IS THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN	J. Revell	12
HYMN OF THE SAVIOUR	Clement of Alexandria	13

## A Voice From the Past

A MEDITATION ON PSALM 32	William Johnson	11
EXTRACTS FROM PAST MINISTRY	G. V. Wigram	14

## Testimony

FURTHER NEWS FROM KROPOTKIN	Sergei Sidorenko	19
-----------------------------	------------------	----

## A Word for Today

A CHRISTIAN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD—1	Gerald Cowell	21
An address at Finchley, June 1953, which continues the series on foundational truth begun in Issue No 13.		

---

If you know of any one who might like to subscribe to "*Living Water*" please write to the address below; their name will be added to the mailing list and they will receive the next few issues of the magazine free of charge.

"*Living Water*" is edited by Mark Lemon & published by the Stone Publishing Trust (Registered Charity 1034689) 130 London Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1BA.

**Correspondents within the UK are welcome to use the Freepost address:**  
Stone Publishing Trust, FREEPOST TN3448, SEVENOAKS, Kent TN13 1BR

Quotations from the Bible given in "*Living Water*" are normally from the Darby translation or from the Authorised (King James) Version.

Articles are sometimes shortened or otherwise amended.  
All articles are Copyright to the Stone Publishing Trust.

## COURAGE

<b>Matthew</b>	<b>9: 1 - 2</b>
	<b>14: 23 - 29</b>
<b>John</b>	<b>16: 32, 33</b>
<b>Deuteronomy</b>	<b>31: 7-8</b>
<b>Acts</b>	<b>27: 22-26</b>

I want to speak of the pathway of christian witness. You will see that all the scriptures I have read are set against the background of some form of the devil's attack.

### **“Be of good courage, child; thy sins are forgiven”**

I read from the ninth chapter of Matthew to indicate the start of the life of christian witness. I am concerned that we might each and all of us review, in the calm of this meeting, our spiritual beginnings, because I have an impression that greater depth in the understanding of our link with the Lord will help us to be a little more pliable in the manner in which we administer the grace of forgiveness ourselves.

I would like to speak to the young people here, just for a moment or two. I want to commend to them this word: “Be of good courage, child; thy sins are forgiven”. Why does the Lord say that? Because, I think, that the path of christian witness, insofar as the paralytic is concerned, is just beginning and he needs, as we all need, to be of good courage.

Now I would like to ask all here as to what experience they have had in relation to that time when, in our great sorrow, we came in the spirit of repentance to the Saviour who loved us so much that He followed us even though we were on the road to eternal punishment? On that road, in grace beyond all compare, He drew near to us in wondrous love. We found ourselves in deep distress, we confessed our sins at His blessed feet and have known something of the blessedness of the way He freely forgave us. That is the reason why we have sung two hymns together:

*‘O Lord, what burdens Thou didst bear!  
Our load was laid on Thee’; and,*

*‘When peace like a river attendeth my way,  
When sorrows like sea billows roll’.*

They both bear on the matter of our individual relations with the Lord as to the forgiveness of our sins.

Now, if you share with me that experience of coming to the Saviour in the spirit of repentance and having the burden of your sins taken away, I would like to ask if you understand what was behind that tremendous intervention?

Do you remember the word: “the way thou walkest in is for ruin before me” (Numbers 22:32)? We were each on the road that lead to hell. We were arrested in our course by the Spirit of God and we appreciated the grace of a Saviour who loved us so much that He took all our sins upon Himself. What a Saviour He is! But more than this. He cleared our every liability: our past sins, our present sins and our future sins; they are all gone. No wonder we say, ‘Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul’. But at what a cost! I think of those blessed footsteps that lead my Saviour all the way to Calvary. I see that great burden of sin put upon Him, “Him who knew not sin he has made sin for us, that we might become God’s righteousness in him” (2 Corinthians 5:21). What a Saviour! And do you realise, beloved young friends, that at the time you gave your heart to Jesus the whole matter was ratified in heaven? Perhaps you had not thought much about heaven’s eye being upon you when you came to the Saviour. Well, it was! There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over repenting sinners. Thank God for every one here who has yielded his or her heart to Christ. Take courage from that, young people. Maybe things are cloudy and misty, and I can understand that, for we live in a very difficult age. But the Spirit of God would give us to understand that when we placed our trust in that wondrous Saviour all was well. We are brought into the divine family; we understand something of the glory of the gift of the Spirit; we are clothed with divine righteousness, wondrously blessed for time and for eternity. No wonder we say at times, ‘Hallelujah! what a Saviour’.

Now, what about the dark background to the healing of the paralytic about which we read? Some said of the Lord, “He blasphemeth”. How awful to say that of Jesus! A point I want to stress is that christian witness is against a background of the efforts of the enemy. I firmly and soberly believe this, that the closer we come to the rapture the more the enemy is out to rob God. That is a point I think we need quietly to ponder.

“Thy sins are forgiven”. Think of what those words meant to the Lord. I think of my Saviour’s blessed footsteps all the way to Calvary. At every step His burden became greater until finally at Calvary He dealt with the whole sin

question. In the Saviour's gracious service, you were in mind for blessing. No matter what happens in the world, all is well because you have given your heart to Jesus. He has taken you by the hand and He will never let you go.

He wants your witness now. He wants you to testify. Have you done that? In my early teens I used to worry my parents. They did not know whether I loved the Lord or not, and for a time neither did I. Until one day the inroads of death, through a sad tragedy, hit me and I said to myself, 'Surely not! One day I have got to die?' It led me to the One who has been into death and broken its power. That is the Saviour who loves you. That is the Saviour who says as you are going to embark from tonight on this course of christian witness, 'Take courage'.

There is another thing which ought to be said about the man in chapter nine. He was willing to be lowered by the four into the presence of Jesus. Not only is there the gift of the Spirit to help us to understand the mighty resources that there are in Christ personally, but there is the love of the brethren. It says of Paul that he saw the brethren and thanked God and took courage (Acts28:15). May we all take courage from tonight.

May we all work together in relation to the gospel. Many years ago I spent a considerable amount of time in stretcher-bearing over very difficult country. If you have a stretcher between the four of you and you do not work together, you can soon tip the patient off! It is a question of our working together to encourage one another, and particularly those who are younger, that we may all find our feet on this pathway of christian witness until the day that Jesus comes.

### **“Take courage; it is I”**

We go on to chapter 14. It says there, “But in the fourth watch of the night he went off to them, walking on the sea”. The fourth watch—that is between three and six o'clock in the morning. It is just as dawn is beginning to break. The light of another day is already dawning. We are soon going to see the blessed Saviour. And we are going to fall at His feet with one loud, Hallelujah! What a Saviour He is!

But now you see there is a dark background here yet again; you have the winds and the waves that are blown up by the devil. Job knew something about the

One “Who ... treadeth upon the high waves of the sea” (Job 9:8). No matter what state the water is in, no matter what the storm, Christ is superior to it all. He comes in the fourth watch of the night after a busy day. He had seen a crowd and had compassion on them; He healed their infirm; He fed the thousands and dismissed the crowds in His own grace. He goes up into the mountain and prays for them. Now I am fully aware that there is a dispensational setting to this section and I am not thinking so much of that. I am thinking of the invitation that comes to you tonight from a Saviour who is superior to any and every circumstance and He is saying to you, “Take courage; it is I”.

Are you going to commit your life to Him? Peter says to Him, “Lord, if it be thou, command me to come to thee”. Are you going to place your life in His hands? Are you going to be a witness for Him at school, at home, at work...? Is He not worthy of your witness. He says later on, “I have been born for this, and for this I have come into the world, that I might bear witness to the truth” (John 18:37). What it cost Him to be a witness! What a witness He was!

Peter says, “Lord, if it be thou, command me to come to thee upon the waters. And he said, Come. And Peter, having descended from the ship, walked upon the waters to go to Jesus. But seeing the wind strong he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched out his hand...” You may wonder how ever you are going to get on if you come out in full unreserved committal to Christ. You are going to prosper in this witness! How many today, thank God, over vast areas of the world are witnessing their love for Christ and souls are being secured for Christ. The witness is growing every day. May it grow from this little time here together tonight. May someone for the first time step into the path of christian witness, confessing Jesus as Lord, and proving the practical salvation that comes thereby.

Peter got his eye off the Lord and looked at the storm and began to sink. You may well begin to sink; I have often felt like this. What can we do? “Lord, save me” is the cry. And the word to those in the boat? “Be of good courage, it is I” (Mark 6:50).

They were in the midst of the sea of Galilee which is seven miles across and the Saviour comes walking on the sea in these early hours of the morning. What a day it had been. Go through chapter fourteen at your leisure. What unremitting service. What mighty healing power and then going on the mountain to pray. It speaks of how He is on high in glory tonight, a Prince and a Saviour and He is praying for us. He prays for someone here to be given the strength of faith to

move now in relation to a good solid christian witness based on the knowledge that our sins are all forgiven.

May I ask, are there any secret disciples here? What has your witness been like the last week? What has mine been like? I believe the Spirit of God is making this appeal to us. No one has ever loved us as He loves us. The might of that work in the forgiveness of our every liability I believe is the solid basis upon which committal in relation to christian witness must be made.

“Peter, having descended from the ship, walked upon the waters to go to Jesus. But seeing the wind strong he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught hold of him, and says to him, O thou of little faith”. He takes the sinking Peter by the hand. Are you going to let Him take you by the hand?

### **“Be of good courage, I have overcome the world”**

I read from chapter 16 of John’s gospel to say a brief word about the opposition. We read, “Behold, the hour is coming, and has come, that ye shall be scattered, each to his own, and shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. These things have I spoken to you that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye have tribulation; but be of good courage: I have overcome the world.” I go in mind back to the scene of the temptation. I think of the devil leading my Saviour to a very high mountain and showing Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory. My Saviour would have none of it. He falls back on the scripture, Matthew 4:8,9,10. Later He says “the ruler of the world comes, and in me he has nothing” (John 14:30). Again, we are told that His dying is to redeem us “out of the present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father” (Galatians 1:4). Separation from the world is a fiat of divine love. We do not want to become monastic but we need to be separate.

“But be of good courage”, He says, “I have overcome the world”. I remember a beloved brother giving an address in Wanstead some years ago. Speaking of the need to have deliverance from the world he referred to Joshua and the walking around Jericho. He said, ‘Young people, understand this, the only way to overcome the world is to keep out of it!’ That is what they did in Joshua’s day; they kept out of it. The moment of triumph came and the wall fell down flat. Rahab was saved as we know. But I commend it to you, that the only way to overcome the world is to keep out of it! That is good advice.

One thing that has hindered a lively, vibrant confession of the name of the Saviour is the sad history that attaches to us. But we have got to get over that. It is no good keeping on about it. We have had the days of sorrow. In some ways they continue still. But we must not be overawed by the sorrow. We must enquire, Why the sorrow? Learn the reasons that we are where we are. The Spirit of God, I believe, would encourage us.

Surely you will to commit yourself or recommit yourself to Him tonight? Unreservedly confess His blessed Name and know what it is to understand that all power has been given to Him in heaven and upon earth. What a Saviour! Let us go forth in the light of that power. Let there be increasing power with our spiritual witness. There is nothing like a good, vibrant witness attached to our localities to keep and preserve the young. It is very much needed just now.

### **“Be strong and courageous”**

I go on to Deuteronomy chapter 31. We are told that Joshua as a young man “departed not from within the tent” of meeting (Exodus 33:11). In the second book of Kings we are told of another young man who was with Elisha the prophet. The enemy was after Elisha and tried hard to get him. Eventually the Syrians besieged the city of Dothan where Elisha was. In the morning Elisha’s servant went out and found the whole city surrounded. Alas! he cried, whatever are we going to do? What did Elisha do? He prayed for the young man’s eyes to be opened so that he might see. What did he see? “Behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha” (2 Kings 6:17). What did Elisha say? “Fear not, for they that are with us are more than they that are with them.” All the resources of heaven were with Elisha. Meetings get small at times. People get a bit discouraged. Nevertheless we are all to take courage and we are to understand that what has been secured for God is going through in His grace until the end.

Now this exhortation to “be strong and courageous” is addressed to Joshua. Joshua is about to take the people into the land. Now what is the “land”? The land is that sphere into which Jesus has gone. In other words the land is Christ glorified. The Saviour who has loved me is now crowned in highest glory and He is there on my behalf. What a glorious precious Saviour He is!

Joshua was a man well qualified to take the people into the land because he had been in himself. From the valley of Eshcol he knew something of the fruits of



the land. He wants others to be led into it. God says to him, “Be strong and courageous, fear them not,” Joshua represents a spiritual lead. Those of us who are older ought to be more concerned to give this spiritual lead in relation to the glory of the land. So the word to him is, “Be strong and courageous, for thou must go with this people into the land which Jehovah hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it. And Jehovah, he it is that goeth before thee: he will be with thee; he will not leave thee, nor forsake thee; fear not, neither be dismayed”. What more could you ask? What a promise! To be unreservedly committed to the One who will see us right the way through.

**“...be of good courage, for there shall be no loss at all of life”**

In Acts 27 we find a picture of the breakdown of the church publicly. How sad. And yet, we are still to be witnesses of what has been set up at the beginning in all its glorious power. There is a need constantly to look back at Pentecost and see the church there as one glorious whole, and to take our cue from it.

The going had been hard for Paul on the boat; the storms had been violent. Our path has not been an easy road, has it? Many have been the disappointments that I have had, and I expect you have had. The word here is, “I exhort you to be of good courage”, and then again, “Wherefore be of good courage, men, for I believe God”. Do we all believe Him? Believe Him in this sense that we are unreservedly prepared to commit our lives to God and to be here for His pleasure and for His praise. Those of us who are older sorrow many a time at the legacy we are leaving behind us due to our own unfaithfulness. We have had to deal with this; we have had to present ourselves before the Lord humbled as to it. But we need to go back to the ancient paths and not depart from them. Maintain a witness to the line of the truth that has come to us; maintain a witness that is patterned after Christ’s own glorious committal.

“Be of good courage” was the word to Paul and through Paul to those on the boat. Soon all will get safe to land. It will not be long, brethren. It will not be long before we are all there.

May the Spirit of God just help us then to understand that in these dark and difficult days there is to be a witness that represents the heart and love of God Himself. A witness in us all, brethren, in one sense a corporate witness in

relation to the setting up of things in our localities to which the Lord can be pleased and will be pleased to add. We need additions.

I want you to look with me as we close at the second epistle to the Corinthians chapter 1. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassions, and God of all encouragement; who encourages us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to encourage those who are in any tribulation whatever, through the encouragement with which we ourselves are encouraged of God” (v.3). I think that must be our prayer towards the close of our time together.

We all need encouraging. We want the encouragement of this time together to be diffused amongst us. God is the “God of all encouragement”. I love that reference. Paul says in that great resurrection chapter, “So encourage one another with these words” (1 Thessalonians 4:18). What words are they? That at any minute now we will see the Saviour face to face!

What will it be like when on the cloud we see that blessed Saviour of ours? We have been honoured to be a little witness for Him whilst here and we shall see Him there in all His glory. What will the praise be like? It will be so vast that I do not think the church family will be able to contain it; it will flow out throughout the universe! We, with one loud Hallelujah, will fall down at His blessed feet.

May the Spirit of God then encourage us and may we each and all be richly blessed. But let us all understand this, that I believe the basis of our spiritual life is in this great transaction that we had when, in all our need, we proved the gracious forgiving spirit of a wonderful forgiving Saviour, when we confessed our sins, were relieved of every liability and brought into the sunshine of His presence by One who will never leave us or forsake us. I believe then this word that we have just read in 2 Corinthians 1 is a suited end to our time together: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassions, and God of all encouragement”. May our hearts all together well up to bless Him for His name’s sake.

*Ron Gregory*

## A MEDITATION ON PSALM 32

This is a psalm to give instruction. It is the first instruction which God gives you. In psalm 1 you have, “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord.” Whoever could be with God on that line? Not a man on earth. Only One could begin there; our Lord could begin there!

I open the book of the psalms and read the first psalm and I am in despair. I cannot say, ‘Here I am, O God. I answer to this psalm, now bless me’. No; I have to say that I have not answered to it at all. What am I to do? I have to go to psalm 32. My beginning with God is there.

The first instruction I get from God is about my sins. “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven.” I often say to people when I find them reading the psalms, ‘Come along, let us read psalm 1. Are you this “blessed man”? Have you never sat in the seat of the scornful?’ They answer, ‘I cannot say that I have not done that’. Then you cannot begin with psalm 1. I put it to them this way: the blessed Man of psalm 1 dies for the filthy man of psalm 14, as we see in psalm 22. The last word of psalm 22 is “He hath done this.” That is the gospel. Take your pencil and write in faith, ‘He hath done this for me.’

God says in psalm 1, “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly,” etc. I say, I cannot face it. But in psalm 32 He says, “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven.” Oh! thank God for that. Blessed is the man who can write at the bottom of psalm 32, ‘For me, for me!’

In psalm 14 the Lord looked down from heaven to see if there were any that did understand. No; they had all gone aside; they had altogether become filthy. I was there—filthy, unprofitable, godless. I was in psalm 14, not in psalm 1. Jesus was in psalm 1 and not in psalm 14; but in psalm 22 we have the Man of psalm 1, spotless, holy, but treated as if He were the man of psalm 14. “Why hast thou forsaken me?” That touches us. The blessed Man of psalm 1 dies for the filthy man of psalm 14 in order that the filthy man of psalm 14 may be in the blessedness of psalm 32.

The blessed man of psalm 32 comes back to walk in the footsteps of the Man of psalm 1. Jesus must be my Saviour before I can follow Him as my example. I can come back now to psalm 1. I can say now, ‘This is how I am to walk’.

*William Johnson*

(The above is based on an article first printed in the “Believer’s Friend” magazine and subsequently reprinted in 1921 by George Morrish)

## “WORTHY IS THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN”

Hark the solemn strains uprising!  
Sweetly swells the note of praise,  
From the chamber where the Saviour  
Leads His own the note to raise.  
On the night of His rejection  
All is darkness, deep'ning gloom,  
As the Son of man goes onward  
To the cross, to death and tomb.

Hark the gentle song uprising:  
Softly swells the note of praise;  
All His anguish we remember  
As to Him the voice we raise.  
All our guilt was laid upon Him—  
On God's own beloved Son;  
All the waves and billows pouring  
O'er His head, He cried, 'Tis done!

Hark the gladsome song uprising;  
Louder swells the note of praise;  
Lord, we hail Thee as the Victor  
While to Thee the voice we raise.  
Thou whom men cast out, rejected,  
Sittest crowned upon God's throne;  
Yea, Amen! Thou, Lord art worthy!  
This we gladly, fully own.

Hark the mighty song uprising!  
Loudly swells the note of praise!  
Heaven and earth shall soon adore Thee.  
All to Thee their voices raise.  
Thou hast loved us, Thou hast washed us  
In Thy blood from every stain;  
Raise we then the joyful chorus—  
Worthy is the Lamb once slain!

*J. Revell (1852 –*

*1900)*

## HYMN OF THE SAVIOUR

Shepherd of tender youth,  
Guiding in love and truth  
Through devious ways;  
Christ our triumphant King,  
We come Thy Name to sing,  
Do Thou our children bring  
To chant Thy praise.

Thou art our holy Lord!  
The all-subduing Word,  
Healer of strife;  
Thou didst Thyself abase,  
That from sin's deep disgrace,  
Thou mightest save our race,  
And give us life.

Thou art the wise High Priest!  
Thou hast prepared the feast  
Of holy love!  
And in our mortal pain  
None calls on Thee in vain—  
Help Thou dost not disdain,  
Help from above.

Ever be Thou our Guide  
Our Shepherd at our side,  
Our staff and song!  
Jesus! Thou Christ of God!  
By the perennial word  
Lead us where Thou hast trod,  
Make our faith strong.

So now, and till we die,  
Sound we Thy praise on high,  
And joyful sing,  
Till all of the glad throng,  
Who to Thy church belong  
Unite and swell the song  
To Christ our King!

*Clement of Alexandria*  
(c 170 - 220)

This is thought to be the oldest Christian hymn in existence. It was written, in Greek, only about 150 years after the apostles.

## **EXTRACTS FROM PAST MINISTRY**

---

We ought to be patient, for He is the doer of everything; and when we are not patient we really find fault with Him and His doing.

---

I refuse to say of myself “bereaved” when the Lord has won another to His presence. I will not say of myself “bereaved” when another has gone to be with Him. Surely if I love Him I must unselfishly resign all I love to Him.

---

He is enough for us were the pathway ten thousand times more sad and difficult.

---

He that made all things, and upholds all things, is equal to, and a match for, any and every contingency that can befall any between calvary and the crown of Glory.

It is a great thing for each to be...ready to act on and from his own responsibility, but never going beyond that which he sees to be his own duty, never acting under the light which others have... I would rather act under God's measure of light given to me, or not act, because I had none such, than be the one to carry out the mind of any man without my being assured his mind was God's mind for me.

---

You would not be easily startled by events if you saw all that you have in Christ to enable you to meet everything calmly.

---

No sin the believer brings to God but when it comes to be weighed is not outweighed by the blood.

---

Remember there is no path for us smoother or broader than the path of the Son of man while in the world.

---

You may have gone through deep water, and many a furrow grief may have left on your forehead, but as you passed through the trouble which did you find most—the trial, or Christ who passed through it with you?

---

I judge that the great thing is to own God and be still. "I was dumb; thou didst it," said David... There is rest in this giving to God His own place.

---

As to heaven, all is right ready for us, and happier they are there than we are here. The good Lord settle for us the times of our going thither, and keep us while here ready and willing to slip in at any moment.

---

If one could be but nothing, He might use us more. The carpenter can use his saw, or file, or hammer without fear of their boasting of the work being their own. If God used His children without a good deal of discipline to them accompanying they would be spoilt and boast in what was wrought as being theirs and not His. He loves us too much for that.

---

The eye that is most anointed will not be the first to see failure in others, and the soul that knows most of walking under the yoke with the Master will not be

the first to undertake the putting right, according to its own mind, of what halts and limps in others.

---

Prayer is sure work and the harbinger of blessing... and often what sets us praying for more is a first dropping of His rich love and grace.

---

We are but leaden pipes to let the water down from the cistern above—dry till it flows in from above and dry if it ceases to flow in. It is good to remember this at all times and to walk humbly in the truth of it... I found it useful (the remembering of it) in praying before speaking. Oft not a word seemed with me to give, and the spreading out before the Lord His estimate of the worthiness of His Son to be spoken about and His will that He should be announced, has been followed by a full fresh flow of water of the word of life.

---

Believe me, you can only plead with God as you know Christ. He alone is the channel by which God can bless... The power of intercession is a great thing to the servant of God.

---

It enables a Christian immensely to know and to feel that he is a channel through which the life of Christ is to flow out.

---

Christ never had a home down here: it was a wilderness to Him, it did not bear the stamp of His Father's heart. If there is a strange place to me, it ought to be the place where my Lord was crucified.

---

The deeply spiritual mind cannot be a great talker, because such is watching and cherishing the visits of the Spirit, ascending at intervals in all the secret acts of love and praise.

---

Can we say of any when going into their house: "That person brings me Christ?" If one had paid a visit to Paul, would not one have come away with a fresh taste of Christ? I have often come out of the house of a poor bedridden creature feeling, Oh, how I wish my soul were like that! Oh, that the pulse of Christ were throbbing in every part of the body! How I want, how I long, to see it so in all who are His.



The early christians presented in a beautiful way the Nazarite character. They walked as those whose hearts Christ had taken away with Him into heaven.

---

So immensely are our lives below the mark as nominal christians that we have next to no idea of the distance at which we walk from God, and when the soul is turned to seek... Him only... we discover with amazement how many false props we have had, and how often we have been leaning on the love and approbation of others and not upon a Father's love alone.

---

That which I desire for you is fellowship with Jesus in that which distinguished Him so pre-eminently above His fellows—repose of character... How blessed and how unearthly the calm, quiet, unruffled composure of the course! No haste, no hurry, because though on earth yet still in heaven. His mind, His heart, deep buried in His Father's love. And may we not thus abide in Christ, and Christ in us?

---

Are you walking in the light of the affections of that Lord Jesus who loved you and washed you from your sins in His own blood? Is that name of Jesus causing a vibration in your heart as you walk along the wilderness?

---

“Having loved his own he loved them to the end”... Oh, how sweet this experience of Christ's love in this cold world! When the heart is chilled, and yearning for a little warmth, how sweet to turn to the Lord Jesus and feel the warmth of His love! Ah, looking up to Him the heart is always warmed.

---

Can you spread out no wants before Christ, the Giver, the Healer? Believers grieve the Spirit by not using Christ, and then God must compel them to do it.

---

To restore from beyond the grave is to Him easy; to turn back the downward course is to Him a pleasure, who is the resurrection and the life.

---

I fear... that... may be working beyond his strength of body... but that is the right side, perhaps, to err upon in these days of self-preservation and avoidance of trusting in God.

God is able to deliver us, not only from the world and Satan practically, but from our own selves also, otherwise what and where would be His great salvation?

---

Satisfied with God, rejoicing in Christ, full of the Holy Ghost, the weakest believer may well be wondered at by men of the earth... who feel an incessant craving for something they know not what.

---

True, death came from the entrance of sin, but, if it should overtake me, I shall be borne upon the crest of the wave, right into the presence of the Lord, one leap into the bosom of Christ!

*G. V. Wigram*

### **Biographical Note**

G. V. Wigram (1805 – 1879) was the 20<sup>th</sup> child of Sir Robert Wigram. He came to know the Lord at nineteen in a remarkable way. He had spent a long and tiring day tramping round the battlefield of Waterloo and on arriving late at night at a lodging went straight to bed. He thought he would say his prayers, a habit of childhood but long abandoned. He knelt down but found he had forgotten what to say; he looked about him searching for the words and then suddenly, to use his own account: ‘there came on my soul something I had never known before. It was as if Someone infinite and almighty, knowing everything, full of the deepest interest in me, though utterly abhorring everything in me, made known to me that He pitied and loved me’. Wigram saw nothing but knew in his spirit that there was One in the room with him who was light and love and who showed to him how far his life had been from God. Wigram said of that moment: ‘I wept for a while on my knees, said nothing, then got into bed. The next morning’s thought was ‘Get a Bible’. I got one and it was thence forward my handbook.’ His life was changed from that day.

Three years later J. N. Darby met him and wrote ‘His spirit and conversation have laid me in the dust; his weighty words and sentences I pray God I may never forget. So much is given him of the Spirit, one felt our Lord’s sanctifying presence amongst us.’

Later in life George Wigram became editor of a periodical called “The Present Testimony”.

## FURTHER NEWS FROM KROPOTKIN

The last issue contained extracts from a letter from Sergei Sidorenko giving details of his work for the Lord in Russia and particularly of the interest generated in the christian stall which he has set up in the Kropotkin market. This second series of extracts from other letters continues the account of the work and of some of the problems he has to face.

---

I would like to share some thoughts with you. I have noticed during my work for the Lord that it demands concentration of strength to go through some temptations. Sometimes when people do not take any interest in God's word I find a voice in my heart saying, 'Stop doing this—who needs it, it is just a waste of time'. It is not right to expect results immediately. I see that the work for the Lord should be patient work day by day with all love.

I went recently to the local hospital to preach, going there first in the morning and putting up a notice about the preaching at 6.00pm. When we arrived there was no one in the hall at all, so we went to the rooms and invited people. They told us that at 6.00pm there was news on TV and later a movie but six people came along and we started. Within a few minutes there were 30 to 40 people. I preached, another brother sang hymns and a young sister recited poetry. Most people listened very carefully and some of the older ladies cried. Two men shouted, 'Don't trust what they are saying. We would like to see what they do when the time of persecution comes again.' We responded, 'We pray to God to give us strength to say Praise God! when you kill us'. Many people told us that it was the first time they had heard the gospel presented clearly.

Some nurses from another ward invited us to go there to preach so we went the next day. There were about 25 people there and we visited others who could not walk. I preached and another brother helped me. We had planned to be there for an hour so as not to disturb the routine of the ward for too long but they kept us there for three hours. There were lots of questions about our life about the church and about false teachings. The patients could not believe that we had not had special Bible education and we responded by telling them, 'If you will trust the Lord Jesus Christ and repent you will get the same understanding and maybe the next time we come here you will be with us to tell other

people.’ Everyone got a New Testament and I give thanks to the Lord for His love to all people.

---

Now in Kropotkin it is very hot weather but people still come to the kiosk to know about God. I am just sorry that they do not take the next step to believe and repent before God. I thank God though that some people who have heard the gospel in my kiosk share their knowledge with their friends who in turn come and ask for help. They say, ‘You do not know us but our friends sent us to get a Bible’.

It takes a lot of time to listen to every person with their problems, it is also very difficult to plan anything. If I plan to do certain things I am almost sure to get diverted. People come to talk about some problem or to ask for help to take someone to hospital by car and the like, and so the day is finished. This goes on day by day. I try everywhere to turn the attention of people to the Lord. At least they will know the way of salvation and have the opportunity to say ‘Yes’ or ‘No’.

---

During the Presidential election I prayed to God to show me which candidate I should vote for. In my brain I understand that Yeltsin is not a dictator, but my heart speaks to me that he is not a christian and he does not serve the Lord. I asked God, ‘Please show me which one to vote for’ but there was no answer. Even when I was going to the central hall to vote I had no answer. I went in and showed my passport and asked for the ballot list to make my choice but they told me that they were sorry but they could not find my name on the voters list. I was angry, I forgot about my prayer, I demanded to fulfil my civil right, but the clerk only said, ‘Sorry, you can complain’. At that moment I switched on again and I thanked God for His answer. The world lives according to the world’s law but I need to follow the Lord Jesus and not worry about the world’s treasures.

*Sergei Sidorenko*

## A CHRISTIAN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD — 1

**Romans 5: 1, 2, 9-11**  
**Hebrews 10: 4-10, 19-22**  
**Ephesians 1: 13, 14**

This meeting has been arranged with a view to God being pleased to help those of us who profess to be christians to understand better the ground of our profession. I trust that there will also be sufficient in what comes before us to make the way of salvation perfectly clear to anyone here who may not yet believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. I trust there will be sufficient to be used of God to bring that soul to Christ, so that we may all leave this room as true believers, and in some measure established in the faith.

I would say at the beginning that there is nothing more important for any of us to consider than our personal relationship with God. Compared with that, other things fade into insignificance. Satan, the enemy of our souls, would endeavour to make us make it the last thing that we should think about, whereas if we face the matter soberly and sensibly we shall surely admit that it is a matter of the very first importance. The way that we stand with man is of little account compared with our relationship with God.

We all need God. We need Him because He is the Rock, the Rock of Ages. Everything else that we might trust in or rely on is going to fail us; heaven and earth will pass away, so that if there is one thing we need, it is to know God. If I know God and have a link with God, and have the consciousness that God loves me, that is of more value than if I possessed a thousand worlds. That priceless possession, the knowledge of God, and the knowledge that He loves you can be yours. The whole universe, put in the scales against the knowledge of God and His love, does not bear comparison. The essential need of every man, woman and child is to know God, and we have got only a short time in which to get to know Him.

Everything depends on the present time, "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). Now is the time to get to know God, to have the love of God shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Spirit, and to become established and certain in your soul as to how you stand in relation to God. That is the question I want to raise with you: have you certainty and assurance in your relationship with God?

You profess to be a christian, you have some respect for the name of the Lord and for the Bible, but I would like to ask you if you have certainty and assurance in your relations with God. God Himself is the Rock of Ages. The Lord Jesus says, "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away" (Mark 13:31). They are in this book, the Bible. This book has been attacked more than any book, but it still stands: the truth of it shines with greater clarity than ever before. It is a great thing that we have the Bible, these living oracles of God. I trust everybody here respects it. I can tell you this, the more you read it and experience what it says, the more you will respect it and be assured of the truth of it.

It is not God's thought that you should be in doubt and uncertainty about the truth. You can be certain because your salvation does not rest upon anything that you have done or could do. If my salvation rested in any degree upon my doings, I should be lost for ever. I might well be uncertain if I even had to do a part of it. If the Lord Jesus had done part and I had to do the rest, I might well be full of uncertainty, and the truth is it would all fail; if anything was left to me it would fail. But the great truth of the glad tidings of God rests on the solid foundation of the Person and the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ. The old hymn says:—

*On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;  
All other ground is shifting sand.*

I want to get you off that shifting sand. You may have had mixed ideas about the ground of your salvation, but you need to come to the solid Rock of Christ and His finished work upon the cross. That is the Rock that I am standing on. Nothing can ever move that Rock, and nothing can ever move those who stand upon it. My eternal salvation is complete and assured, and yours is the same if you are a believer in Jesus. God wants you to enjoy this assurance, this certainty, as trusting in Christ and His finished work.

I put Christ first because the Redeemer is a living Person. When we think of His work we are thinking of the work of a living Person. He says to John, "I am the first and the last, and the living one: and I became dead, and behold, I am living to the ages of ages, and have the keys of death and of hades" (Revelation 1:17,18). He is living, but He became dead. No other man has ever become dead—all others have had to die—the Lord Jesus became dead; it was His own act. He came here to die, so that you and I might be brought to God,

but He is living to the ages of ages. It was impossible that He should be held by death. He tasted death. He said, “Before Abraham was, I am”. Jesus is the I Am, the Eternal God manifest here in flesh. He became dead, but He is living to the age of ages as a risen glorified living Saviour, ever God and yet Man in a glorified condition. Peter says, “This same Jesus”. He is the same Jesus, and His final word in the Bible is, “I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify these things to you in the assemblies. I am the root and offspring of David, the bright and morning star” (Revelation 22:16). So it is a living Person we rest upon, One who is living to the ages of ages. But we would have no right to put our trust in Him, there would be no basis for it, if He had not died and so we trust in Jesus, a living glorified Saviour and His work upon the cross.

I want to say a few words about the work of Jesus on the cross. It is referred to in the passages we read. We need to understand these passages to get the assurance and certainty I have been speaking of. The first says, “having been justified on the principle of faith, we have peace towards God”. Have you peace towards God? It speaks in Hebrews chapter 10 about the worshippers once purged having no longer any conscience of sins. If you have once known the purging power of the precious blood of Christ, your conscience will never trouble you again in this particular way in relation to God. If you go on carelessly you may lose communion with the Lord and your conscience will trouble you in that sense, because you will feel you have grieved the One who died for you, but you will never be afraid of the wrath to come. If your conscience is once purged of that fear, it is a completed matter. You have no more conscience of sins in the sense of being afraid of their final consequences. As justified by faith we have peace with God.

The word “justified” comes from the same root as the word “righteous”. “Just” and “righteous” mean the same thing. “Having been justified on the principle of faith” means that having been set up in judicial righteousness before God, on the principle of faith, we have peace towards God. There could never be any assurance of our eternal salvation if it were not based on righteousness. If it were not on a righteous basis, which nobody could ever challenge, we should never be safe. It is a most important thing to understand that we are set up in judicial righteousness before God.

The need for justification appeals to guilty people. “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3) and then there follows “being justified freely by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God

has set forth a mercy seat, through faith in his blood”. We are all guilty. We deserve the wrath of God. Our sins deserve eternal judgment. What has God done to meet that position? He has not overlooked our sins. God sent His Son, and Peter says of the Lord Jesus “who himself bore our sins in his body on the tree”. Jesus died as the Sinbearer. He bore the judgment. He cried, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” He was bearing what was due to you and to me before God.

If we were to stand before God in our sins (and may God grant that none of us here may do so), it would mean eternal banishment from His presence. Not a soul with sin upon him can come into the presence of God. But Jesus took our sins upon Himself. God sent Him for that very purpose that He should die and bear our sins upon the cross, and now He is set forth as a living Man in heaven for faith to lay hold of as a mercy seat. The mercy seat is where God meets us, where He will speak to us on most favourable terms. He says to Moses, “there will I meet with thee” (Exodus 25:22). The precious blood of Christ has been shed. It goes on to say, “whom God has set forth a mercy seat, through faith in his blood, for the shewing forth of his righteousness, in respect of the passing by the sins that had taken place before” (Romans 3:25).

All the sins God forgave in the Old Testament were forgiven on the ground that Jesus was going to be the Sinbearer. All the sins that will ever be forgiven are forgiven on the basis of the precious blood of Christ. There is no other basis on which forgiveness can come to any man or woman or child in the world’s history. That is the truth, and God has shown forth His righteousness. God is going to save a vast multitude but He will do it on an absolutely right basis, not by overlooking sins, but by glorifying Himself in His righteousness. How can God prove His righteousness in saving guilty sinners from their sins? Only by “not sparing his own Son but delivering him up for us all” (Romans 8:32). All the offerings in the Old Testament looked on to this. The continual sacrifices on the altar of old all foreshadowed the great truth that Jesus was to come — that He was to be the Sinbearer. It is a most marvellous thing that God has found a means of righteously saving guilty sinners. Yet, God foresaw all this. The Lord Jesus was foreordained from before the foundation of the world as the Lamb who was going to die (1 Peter 1:20). But think of God conceiving a plan whereby He could free the sinner from his guilt and yet manifest His righteousness, not His laxity (which could never be) about sin. God is absolutely righteous in all that He does, and yet saves the sinner. That is where His love comes in.



It is God's love that moves Him to act in this way to save the sinner. People wonder sometimes what glory means. The glory that God has got to Himself in this respect is that He has found a way of acting in perfect love and forgiving the sinner and yet upholding in an absolute sense His righteousness. The believer thus realises that, through believing in the Lord Jesus, he stands before God in judicial righteousness, absolutely clear from every charge on an absolutely righteous foundation. No enemy can accuse him. "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever" (Isaiah 32:17). The way we get peace towards God and quietness and assurance for ever is by understanding that the basis of our salvation is in righteousness, and therefore no enemy can bring an accusation against us. Because of Jesus and His blood we are "justified by faith, we have peace with God". "Who shall bring an accusation against God's elect? It is God who justifies".

I trust these few words will help us all towards peace with God and assurance. A soul that rests on the righteousness of God can never be moved, and understands, in a true way, the love of God. Whereas a soul that rests on the love of God without understanding God's righteousness, is never sure, and does not understand the true nature of God's love.

Sanctification is needed by defiled persons; justification is needed by guilty persons, but they are the same persons, and it is the same work. Although I am going to speak about three aspects of the work of Christ it is one work. The Holy Scriptures give us the various aspects to help us to understand the work of Christ, but it is one work. Every guilty person must be a defiled person because sin defiles us. We may know our sins are forgiven, but still be doubtful about entering God's presence because we are conscious of the defilement of sin. But the very work that justified me has sanctified me. "... by which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

This is not progressive sanctification. "We have been sanctified ... once for all." He has taken my place upon the cross. God made Him to be sin for me, and the result is God no longer sees me as connected with my Adam state—the state in which I was born in sin. In the death of Christ I can say in faith that I died with Him, and I live now in Him, the risen Man. I am in all His acceptance before God, so that not only is there no charge against me, but in God's sight none of the defilement belonging to the old order attaches to me. I have been buried with Him and raised with Him by faith of the working of God.

That mighty work of Christ has not only justified me, but it has sanctified me. Paul writes to the Corinthians and calls them sanctified in Christ Jesus. We are saints by divine calling; we are saints because of the Person and work of Christ, and our faith in Him. That is how we have become numbered amongst God's holy ones, saints set apart for Him, pleasurable to Him.

The understanding of this gives us boldness. The understanding of justification gives me peace and assurance; but the understanding of sanctification gives me boldness. There are many christians who think it presumption. But if I have not peace, assurance and boldness it is because I have failed to apprehend the greatness of the Person and work of Christ. You may think it is very humble to say you are not sure of your eternal salvation, but you are casting a slur on the Person and work of Christ. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness for entering into the holy of holies by the blood of Jesus". The holy of holies in the tabernacle was just a figure of the true. Only the high priest dare enter there, and he only went in once a year. What a difference in christianity—the Son of God has come. He says, "Lo, I come ... to do, O God, thy will". He has offered up His body.

Sacrifices such as those prescribed in the Old Testament are no longer required, for Christ's sacrifice has eternal efficacy. "For by one offering he has perfected in perpetuity the sanctified". If we understand that we have boldness. Of old no one dare draw near except the high priest once a year, but now every believer, "having... boldness for entering into the holy of holies by the blood of Jesus" can enter into the holiest place in the universe at any time. We are not afraid to go there. We surely desire to magnify our Saviour and we do this by drawing near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith. We enter the most holy place, the very presence of God, and find a welcome there. We have boldness to enter by the blood of Jesus, not by our works; nothing we could do would have conferred this privilege upon us. It is by the blood of Jesus, "by the new and living way which he has dedicated for us through the veil, that is, his flesh".

Now another aspect of the death of Christ is brought before us in Romans 5:10: "For if, being enemies, we have been reconciled to God through the death of his Son". Enemies need reconciliation. We were all guilty and defiled; we were all enemies, alienated from God. Every one of us needed justifying and sanctifying and, similarly, each one needed to be reconciled, and the one great work on the cross has effected all.

Reconciliation is received as we repent and believe in the Lord Jesus. This is a wonderful thing. “When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son”. “The death of His Son” is a most touching expression—it brings out the love of God. Think of God acting like this towards His enemies. He has compassion on the guilty and defiled, and would meet their state. But their very guilt lay in the fact that they were enemies. Men have turned their backs on God, are alienated in mind by wicked works; they do not want God. Have you ever heard of anyone treating his enemies like this? “When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son”.

The state of enmity came to a head at the cross. The Lord Jesus says, “ye have both seen and hated both me and my Father”. The cross is an inexcusable crime on the part of man— it cannot be whitewashed— there are no extenuating circumstances. Christ was hated because He was perfect goodness. Sin makes us like that; we hate what is good, and turn away from every mention of God. If we pursue that course we shall go to hell because that will be our proper place. We could not go to heaven because it is the home of love, and a hateful person could not go there.

We were all involved in the crime of the crucifixion, both Jew and Gentile; and when our enmity was fully exposed we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son. The same death that men imposed on Jesus, God made an atoning death. The great work of reconciliation was carried out; Jesus took the whole matter of sin on Himself. Such grace and love has never been seen elsewhere; it could only be found in God. To know a God who treats His enemies like that fills our hearts with joy. How can we help boasting in a God like this? I do not know a worse enemy than myself. When I was an enemy I was reconciled to God by the death of His Son. No wonder I boast in God—that is where real christian joy comes in. We know our salvation rests on righteousness and cannot be challenged; we have boldness because we know He has cleansed us from our defiled condition; but we joy in God because He has reconciled us (we who were enemies) and it has completely overcome us and has filled our hearts with unspeakable joy. We are making our boast in God, and we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

I hope everybody here has peace and joy and boldness. As you kneel down tonight to pray, may you experience what it is to enter the holiest, conscious

that it is your eternal home, and may you have the unspeakable joy of being consciously reconciled to God by the death of His Son.

I would like very briefly to speak about God's side of this matter. We joy in God, but Luke 15 shows God's joy in us as reconciled to Him. It shows how God loves to have us in His presence. The younger son says, "I will rise up and go to my father, and I will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee; ... make me as one of thy hired servants. But while he was yet a long way off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell upon his neck, and covered him with kisses". That is reconciliation! That is the way God treats those who were in a state of enmity but repent. He is just waiting for our return. He "fell upon his neck and covered him with kisses". It is love like this which led God to give His Son. He says, "Bring out the best robe and clothe him in it". It is a question of His own joy in having us in His presence. Reconciled persons are brought into God's presence as sons. The Father says, "let us eat and make merry: for this my son was dead and has come to life".

You may say, 'How can I be kept in the enjoyment of these things? I am enjoying these things while you speak of them, but I am afraid tomorrow the joy will wane.' As we rest upon that Blessed Person and His finished work as it says, "in whom ye also have trusted, having heard the word of the truth, the glad tidings of your salvation" we are sealed with the Holy Spirit, for it goes on to say, "in whom also, having believed, ye have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise" (Ephesians 1:13).

If you are a real believer, God will seal you: God seals His own property which He has bought at such tremendous cost, and He seals you with the gift of the Holy Spirit. He takes possession of us by giving us His Spirit to dwell in us but that same Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance. The Holy Spirit is given to us to maintain us in the enjoyment of these things until the actuality arrives. There is no reason for your joy to wane, but there is every reason for your peace and boldness and joy to increase every day.

May God help us to be in the power and enjoyment of these things for His name's sake!

*Gerald Cowell*