

Living Water

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This article seems to be one of a series of addresses given in answer to specific questions. On this occasion the question was: 'How are wrong habits to be corrected, especially after one has experienced discouragement by repeated failure in seeking to correct them?'

Recent Ministry

THE DIVINE STANDARD

God's Standard for the believer's walk

1 Peter 2:21

Introduction

In the last issue Alex Mowat considered God's standard for forgiveness. In this article he looks at the walk or manner of life of a Christian.

We live in a world where standards are adapted to meet the times. As a result, practices become far removed from what might have previously been acceptable. Sadly, this invades Christian circles as well, and, at times, what occurs under the guise of Christianity often is shameful to the name of Christ. We must direct ourselves to divine standards. These never change. They are abidingly constant, and are an unfailing yardstick to put against every aspect of the believer's life.

When Christians seek a standard by which to measure their walk here, they need not look to any human standards or even the standards given by God of old in the law. God only has one standard before Him and that is Christ.

God's standard for the believer's walk

I want to say a little about the Christian's walk and am linking it with the standard that Peter sets forward in Christ Himself. Paul says, "Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love". Two men in the pre-flood world are said to have walked with God — Enoch and Noah. As walking with God, they would learn to imitate God, and their walk would become a reflection of God. Indeed, of Enoch, it is said that, "before his translation he has the testimony that he pleased God" (Hebrews 11:5). I wonder, if as we walk here, we have that testimony in the presence of God? Not exactly how other people view us, but how God views our walk. Does it come up to His standard? Enoch's walk was such that it pleased God and it is said in the

scripture “he was not, for God took him” (Genesis 5:24).

He walked with God during all the cares and responsibilities of family life just like us all here. We may be burdened down with this and that, but let us keep simply walking with God. Enoch’s was not a silent walk because God spoke to him, and he prophesied. How interesting are the possibilities when walking with God. There is a poem that refers to a walk with Jesus, and a talk with Jesus. That is open to us all.

**Noah lived in...
a violent and
corrupt world**

The other man, Noah, lived in a very difficult day, in a violent and corrupt world, very similar to our day. It says of him, “Noah found favour in the eyes of Jehovah. ...Noah walked with God” (Genesis 6:8,9). It is one thing to walk with God in comfortable circumstances, but it is more testing to do so when circumstances are difficult and not so favourable. Yet Noah walked with God, and as walking with Him, he reflected and represented God.

We use these men as models, but, of course, the perfect model is the Lord Jesus. “Even as the Christ loved us, and delivered Himself up for us, as a sweet-smelling savour.” What a walk was the walk of Jesus! Every footstep, every day, there was fragrance to God from the walk of Christ. Put Him in an area of hostility and it did not change His walk. Put Him among His disciples and the fragrance was always beautiful, an offering and sacrifice to God of a sweet-smelling savour. That takes us back to the fragrance of the burnt offering — its head, with its legs, with its inwards. As far as His walk is concerned Peter says that He did no sin. That was why I read that verse: “Christ also suffered for you, leaving you a model that ye should walk in His steps”. That is what we are called to do, just step by step to follow Christ.

As we look for a standard, an ideal, we see it, not in Noah, nor in Enoch, but perfectly set forward in the Lord Jesus. Peter says, ‘There He is!’ Let us follow in His steps. There is a little verse that puts it so well for the believer:

He does not lead me year by year
Nor even day by day
But step by step my path unfolds.
My Lord directs my way.

Tomorrow's plans I do not know,
I only know this minute.
But He will say, This is the way –
By faith now walk ye in it.

Are you prepared to follow in His steps, to have your pathway measured alongside the pathway of Christ? Of course, there was only one perfect Man. He was here doing the will of God in absolute perfection. But Peter, yes the Peter who had failed and denied Him, and had been so much trouble to Him, when writing his epistle says, 'He is the perfect model that we should follow in His steps'. "For to this have ye been called." So the pathway of Jesus went on. As John the Baptist looked at Him as He walked, his heart was filled with the glory of this blessed One. "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world". Then he was given a second look, "looking at Jesus as He walked... Behold the Lamb of God". (John 1:29,36). Oh, if we are to walk here pleasing to the Lord Jesus, pleasing to God, it must be only as we measure our steps against the steps of the perfect One. He is there to help and to support. He is there to see us all the way through, and when we are weak and fail, He is ready to lift us up. He prayed that Peter's faith would not fail. How constant is His service on high, in intercessory grace, that such as we might be able to walk in His steps!

The Christian's walk should be different from what is going on around us in the world. In Ephesians 5 we read, "be not drunk with wine, in which is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit". The drunken man staggers this way and that way. The Christian's walk, as filled with the Holy Spirit, is to be different. As he walks in the Spirit, it will become apparent, and the fruit of the Spirit will come to light. The fruit begins with love, and it arises from a walk, following in the steps of the Master Himself.

Alex Mowat

Extracted from an address at Hampton, February 2009.

In the next issue — "The Divine Standard of Holiness and Love"

TREASURE RECEIVED AND DELIVERED

1 Corinthians 15:3-10

1 Corinthians 11:23-33

2 Timothy 1:14, 2:2

Introduction

I would like to speak about two things that Paul had received from the Lord and that he delivered to believers in Corinth.

On the second of his journeys the apostle Paul stayed 18 months at Corinth. He stayed initially with a man and his wife, Aquila and Priscilla, who were tent makers and he worked with them as well as preaching. The Lord told him one night that He had many people in that city and he was to "speak and be not silent" (Acts 18:10, 9). So we find that many believed and formed the church (or the assembly) of God, that was in Corinth.

Paul wrote to the Corinthians after he had left Corinth and had heard reports that caused him sorrow. He says in 2 Corinthians 2:4 that he wrote the first letter with many tears. However he reminds them of what he had received from the Lord and of what he had delivered to them.

A few weeks ago I was in a third world country where among many poor quality buildings there I saw a very attractive modern high building with tinted glass that had been erected four years ago. However its windows have come loose, it has been vacated and will be eventually demolished because it is built upon bad foundations. I asked myself: Am I building upon good foundations? Or do I just display outward show with an unsound basis?

Paul said the Christians in Corinth came short in no gift (1 Corinthians 1:7). Yet, as another has said, they treated their gifts like toys and they were reigning as kings (1 Corinthians 4:8). Paul had laid a good foundation among them which was Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 3:10, 11) and in this letter he recalls them to what is foundational. I think oftentimes in our lives as believers we too have to return to quite basic things, yet things that are very precious and important.

Paul said he had delivered to them truth he had received from the Lord in glory. It does not exactly say in first Corinthians 15 that Paul had received the gospel from the Lord but he makes plain in his letter to the Galatians that he did not receive it from man or through man but directly from Jesus Christ in heaven (Galatians 1:11). Paul was conscious that he had obtained something that was very precious — the glad tidings of the unsearchable riches of Christ (Ephesians 3:8), and that is what he told forth to others.

And then in 1 Corinthians chapter 11 he said, “I received from the Lord” when he refers to the Lord’s supper. Paul received this truth from the Lord and he delivered it faithfully to believers in Corinth. I believe we should reconsider what is basic, ensure we are still in the gain of it and then pass it on to others.

What Paul Received — The Gospel — One Wonderful Person

Let us think of what Paul stated in 1 Corinthians 15. He said, “I delivered to you, in the first place, what also I had received that Christ died for our sins”. Paul’s gospel centred in a Person, one Person only, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ. We can easily be over-occupied with Christian activities, achievements, leaders, or even the faults of others and get diverted from the message that centres in a wonderful living Person, Jesus Christ.

“Christ died for our sins” (1 Corinthians 15:3).

Paul writes that “Christ died”. That wonderful Person who lived such a perfect life of such beauty and holiness and compassion and goodness died. Paul says earlier in his epistle that when he came to Corinth he did not know anything among them save Jesus Christ and Him crucified (1 Corinthians 2:2).

Recently a Moslem gave me a book to read that he thought would help me! The author of this book stated that it was abhorrent to think that there could possibly be any way of salvation connected with somebody who had been crucified. It reminded me of Paul’s words: “the word of the cross is to them that perish is foolishness” and “to Jews an offence, and to nations

foolishness" (1 Corinthians 1:18, 23). God's salvation not only centres in a Person but it is centred in a Person who lived here and who died on the cross at Calvary. It is still foolishness to unbelievers yet the wonder remains throughout the world, that souls are saved by the word of the cross.

Sins are still abhorrent to God. For one sin Adam and Eve were driven out of the Garden of Eden. Every one of my sins is abhorrent to God, but, thank God, Christ died for my sins. Paul adds "according to the scriptures". He doubtless was thinking of passages like Isaiah 53.

We live in a world today where sin is glossed over. In our society, sin is not treated in the way that God treats it. The message in the gospel is that every sin affronts the holiness of God, yet Christ died for the ungodly. Christ died to put away sins by His sacrifice. Other writers, of course, make similar statements. Peter says that He bore our sins in His body on the tree (see 1 Peter 2:24). It is the foundation upon which every individual and collective blessing is based and from which God gets the glory.

"...and that he was buried" (1 Corinthians 15:3)

Paul continues "...and that he was buried". He was taken from that cross by loving hands and He was put into a tomb. And for three days and three nights when Jesus was in the tomb neither his disciples nor the world saw Jesus. He was actually buried. Why was He buried? Part of the penalty for Adam after he had sinned was "dust thou art; and unto dust shalt thou return" (Genesis 3:19). There was no penalty due to Jesus: He was the sinless One. He died for our sins; that was vicarious. He bore the believer's sins in His body on the tree and then He was actually buried. He lay in the grave for three days and three nights. He went there to put me out of sight. He put my sins out of God's sight on the cross; He put me out of God's sight in His burial.

One of the big problems at Corinth was they were not out of sight; they were boasting, bragging how great they were, how important they were, how much light they had. Alas, sometimes Christians do that kind of thing ! Yet Paul says, "and was buried".

He also says “he that boasts let him boast in the Lord” 1 Corinthians 1:30.

“...and that he was raised the third day...” (1 Corinthians 15:4).

Paul adds, “and that he was raised the third day, according to the scriptures”. It is wonderful to know that Jesus is alive. What an impact Jesus made on various disciples when He appeared to them after He rose again. Paul recounts six different instances where Jesus actually appeared to different people, to individuals, to more than one person including “above five hundred brethren at once”. Each time He appeared He gave them victory in their souls. He assured them that His work on the cross was complete and that there were blessings as a result. Think of Him coming in among His disciples and saying “Peace be unto you”! How could He say that? Because He had made peace by the blood of His cross!

Paul does not only speak of the death and resurrection of Christ in general terms, but of its impact on himself. He says, “I am the least of the apostles, who am not fit to be called apostle, because I have persecuted the assembly of God”. Paul is an example for us, to speak of ourselves as trophies of the grace of God. This afternoon I met a sick brother who spoke with joy of his appreciation of the Saviour. It makes an impact upon you when

**It is wonderful
to know that
Jesus is alive**

you meet a brother or sister who speaks to you feelingly of what Jesus has done for him.

After Paul reminds them of the foundation of Christianity, he then confronts the wrong teaching about resurrection. I increasingly feel that the only way to meet

what is wrong, whether it is wrong conduct or wrong teaching, is by drawing attention to the scriptures. What does the scripture say? Jesus said, “They shall know the truth, and the truth shall set them free” (John 8:32). The truth is able to set anyone free — free from wrong ideas, free from wrong doctrine, free from wrong conduct.

Paul explains how resurrection affects believers now and eternally. He says, "the first fruits, Christ; then those that are the Christ's at his coming". He draws attention in chapter 15 to what will happen when believers die and are raised again. "Sown a natural body ... raised a spiritual body" - sown in weakness, raised in glory. And then he adds, "Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ". All the blessings of the gospel come to us through Him and God wants us to enjoy them while we are still here in this difficult world with all its pressures, tests, and disappointments. Victory is to be ours now, not only in the future.

What Paul Received — The Lord's Supper

Remembering a Person

Paul's references to the Lord's supper in chapter 11 draws our attention to having Him in our affections. It does not emphasise our sins but calling Him to mind and what we should do for Him.

Let me give you an illustration which has been a help to me. Genesis chapter 40 recounts how the chief of Pharaoh's cup-bearers and the chief baker were in the prison with Joseph. Joseph was able to interpret their dreams and he told them what would happen to them. The gospel comes to us like an interpretation. It tells us what is wrong with us, where we are with God and the way out of the mess in our lives through sin. It draws attention to Jesus as the one and only Saviour who can take away our sins and give us new life abundantly in Himself. That is like the interpretation.

But there is another side. Joseph, after interpreting to the butler his dream, said to him, 'When it is well with you, remember me'. Everything then went well with the butler and what did the butler do? It says he, "did not remember Joseph, and forgot him" (Genesis 40:23). If we do not remember the Lord we are likely to forget Him.

It is very easy to forget how much we owe to Jesus in the everyday affairs of life. In wisdom He has provided a very simple means in the Lord's supper, so that believers remember Him and

keep Him in their minds.

Remembering His suffering love

Paul says, "I received from the Lord, that which I also delivered to you". I do not think he would have delivered this doctrine in his first preaching because he would have been presenting God's approach to men in Christ as the Saviour of sinners. But once people came to Christ then he must have told them about the Lord's supper — our response to Him.

He adds, " that the Lord Jesus, in the night in which he was delivered up, took bread, and having given thanks broke it, and said, This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me.". Paul specially mentions that it was in the night in which the Lord Jesus was delivered up. This scripture centres our minds on Jesus and on the way He has gone in suffering love to win our hearts for Himself, despite treachery and rejection.

It draws our attention to Him, not so much His work, but to Himself. And it says, twice, "this do in remembrance of me". It keeps the Lord Jesus personally before us and help us understand what the church is in relation to Him.

Paul says of the supper 'I delivered it to you' Who is the 'you'? The "you" was the church of God in Corinth, all the believers in Corinth. Paul did not just deliver what he had received from the Lord to elders or to a special class among believers. He delivered it to all the believers who were in the city of Corinth. The Bible teaches the priesthood of all believers and therefore any brother is able to break the bread or administer the Lord's supper. I know there is church order set out in chapter 14 of this epistle but that does not require a special class for administering the Lord's Supper.

"Until he come" (1 Corinthians 11:26)

The Lord's supper also draws our attention to the fact that the Lord is coming again. When Jesus instituted the supper He looked ahead. He said, "I will no more drink at all of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God" (Mark

14:25). The Lord's supper draws attention not only to the fact that the Lord Jesus in His love laid down His life for us, but to the wonderful fact that He is coming again. It is very easy to forget about the second coming of the Lord Jesus. When Jesus comes to the world again, He will come "as a thief by night" (1 Thessalonians 5:2) — the world will not be expecting Jesus. But

Christians should be expecting Jesus

Christians should be expecting Jesus and looking forward to the time when He will come into His rights publicly in this world.

An understanding of "until he come" separates us from the whole course of things in this world. As believers, in this world, we should be concerned about the salvation of others, be subject to government, pray for those who rule, "that we may lead a quiet and tranquil life" (1 Timothy 2:2) and that there might be order in society. But the life of a Christian is a pilgrim life. I believe the Lord's supper is given to us to sustain us in our pilgrim life as we pass through this world. As the hymn says:-

'No earth-bound prospect would we know,
But stand expectant, while we show
Thy death as years roll on.'

"Coming together"

You will also notice in this section, from verse 17 onwards, five references to brothers and sisters 'coming together'. It also mentions in the last verse that we read, "when ye come together to eat, wait for one another". Note the concept of 'one another'; it is believers mutually working together. That is a feature that is proper to the church of God.

At Corinth they were at sixes and sevens. They were nominally together but the rich people were despising the poor people. That is not God's thought in Christianity. Paul delivered the Lord's supper to them all. "Rich and poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all" (Proverbs 22:2 KJV).

Later on Paul says, "For also in the power of one Spirit we have all been baptised into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bondmen or free, and have all been given to drink of one Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:13). I wonder what it must have been like in the early days when a master and slave met at the Lord's supper. How did they get on then? But the Lord was the maker of them all. He had died for the master, He had died for the slave and they came together and they could celebrate the Lord's supper together.

"For as often as ye shall eat this bread..." (1 Corinthians 11:26)

It does not tell us in the Bible how often we are to celebrate the Lord's supper. We know that when Paul came to Troas, he was there for seven days and it was on the first day of the week that he and others broke bread: "we being assembled to break bread" (Acts 20:7). Thus there is a very good basis in scripture for partaking of the Lord's supper weekly, on the Lord's day. But Paul certainly mentions the word "often" twice. He certainly intended it to be done often. Why? Because it brings the Lord personally, in all His attractiveness, before our hearts, to keep us warm in our affections for Him.

At Mount Sinai Moses went away for 40 days. The Israelites then said, "this Moses ... we do not know what is become of him!" (Exodus 32:1) and constructed a false god. The Lord's supper is to make sure that we do not drift away in our affections after idols.

The moral challenge of the Lord's supper

There is also a moral challenge connected with the Lord's supper. When speaking to some christians recently I asked them how often they celebrated the Lord's supper and they said they did it, normally, once a year! When I asked them why they did it so infrequently I was told that many people are frightened about the Lord's supper because of the passage that says "whosoever shall eat the bread, or drink the cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty in respect of the body and of the blood of the Lord". I wish more people had this fear of the Lord! It is right for each of

**The Lord's supper is
a constant challenge
to each one of us**

us to be concerned about our state of soul and whether we are fit to partake of the Lord's supper.

But Paul did not say, 'Do not do it since conditions are so bad at Corinth'. He highlighted many sins

in this letter but he did not tell them to stop. What he says to them is "let a man prove himself, and thus eat of the bread, and drink of the cup". I need to be concerned about my moral condition, not just concerned once in my life but continually. Am I in a right state, am I leading a sinful life, am I supporting bad doctrine, and am I identified with bad associations?

I think the institution of the Lord's supper is a constant challenge to each one of us, week by week, as to whether we are keeping ourselves right with the Lord. If we find that we are not we can, thank God, confess our sins. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

It is very striking that, when there are so many things the apostle was seeking to correct, he brings in this simple institution that he had received from the Lord and had delivered to them. I believe it is intended to keep Jesus personally before us, to help us to respect one another, to alert us that He is coming again, to maintain us in a right moral state as well as to announce the death of the Lord in a perishing world until He comes again.

I just want to say one word more and that is from Paul's word to Timothy. "Keep, by the Holy Spirit which dwells in us, the good deposit entrusted". That good deposit certainly would include the whole truth as to the glad tidings concerning Jesus: His perfect life, His work of redemption, His resurrection, His ascension to glory and His coming again. It would also include the truth as to the Lord's supper.

Brothers and sisters, we now are entrusted with these precious things. Let us value them. Let us maintain them. Let us make

sure we do not water down or corrupt the gospel or surrender and neglect the Lord's supper. We cannot maintain this deposit by our own strength. But we can do it by the Holy Spirit which dwells in us. It is wonderful to have received the gift of the Holy Spirit who helps us in so many ways. He helps us to enjoy the blessings of heaven, to overcome our sinful tendencies and to keep the precious things of heaven that have been entrusted to us.

And then he says in chapter 2 "the things thou hast heard of me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men". I think we have an obligation to seek to pass them on to others. Jesus told his disciples not to cast their pearls before swine (Matthew 7:6) but to pass on treasures to others who would appreciate them. Thank God there are people who appreciate divine things. May the Lord help us to maintain them in doctrine and practice by the help of the Holy Spirit and seek to pass them on intact to others. May the Lord bless us all for His name's sake.

Ken Hollands

An address at Warley , 28th June 2008.

Poetry Selection

THE CROSS OF CHRIST

The cross, O blessed tree,
Love's greatest mystery,
That won me, Lord, to Thee!

I love this sacred place,
Where all God's righteous grace
Shines forth in that marred face.

There what I am, I read;
There sin looks sin indeed,
Since He had thus to bleed.

There Truth maintains its word,
While Justice woke its sword
To smite my sinless Lord.

Mercy and peace combine
With righteousness divine,
And all harmonious shine.

But oh, God's perfect love,
All enmities above,
Doth all-surpassing prove.

James G. Deck

MIGHTY SAVIOUR!

Bowed in sorrow in the garden,
Standing silent in the hall,
Crowned with thorns upon the Pavement,
And rejected there by all –
Cast away by men as worthless,
Jesus, Saviour, Holy One,
Walking meekly to Golgotha,
There for sinners to atone.

Wrapped in linen with the spices,
Lying fragrant in the grave,
Rising from the tomb triumphant
Thou art mighty now to save.
Stretching out to loved disciples
Hands of blessing and of grace,
Carried upward into heaven,
Thou art in the Victor's place

H. J. Miles

Testimony Section

THE TESTIMONY OF A CHANGED LIFE

My father came from the Caucasus Mountains in Russia. He was a Sunni Muslim. To this day I still remember him singing his prayers. I remember as a young boy, four or five years old, going to the mosque. When we went to the mosque I used to mimic my father and my grandfather in their prayers. When they got up, I got up: when they bowed down, I bowed down. On the holidays, on Eid, in Ramadan, our family used to celebrate. A lot of food was prepared and relatives would come over. I remember asking my father why we had to sacrifice a sheep. He would tell me it was a substitute for Abraham's son. Allah required us to do that. There was never really a fear of Allah but there was always a respect for Allah. That is the way we were raised.

I started seeing things in a different light for the first time when a friend of mine became a Christian. I saw his life style before he received Christ as his Saviour and after he received Him and there was a big difference! I remember asking him what was going on in his life and why he was not doing the things that he used to do. He told me that he had received Christ; he could not tell me much about the Scriptures or about his faith but I definitely saw there was a difference in his life. As a result I went to a Christian meeting.

Now, I was raised in a town where there was sometimes racial tension between whites and blacks and when I went to this Bible study the company was predominantly black and I was a little intimidated. For the first time I had heard the gospel preached clearly about who Jesus is and what He did. I sat down on a couch and a Bible was given to me. They said, 'Open up to Genesis'.

I said, 'What is Genesis?' I had no idea what Genesis was, but someone came to help me.

They were talking about Adam and Eve and how the first sacrifice in the Bible is when Adam and Eve committed sin and God killed an animal and covered their nakedness with skins of that animal. The point of the message was that God needed a sacrifice for our sins. The thought of the sacrifice just sparked my interest as it reminded me of the sheep slain for Abraham's son but what interested me most was that these people really and truly loved God — not only outwardly but by their actions. That to me was the biggest testimony.

On my second visit, I started to want to learn more about the Bible, where it came from, who wrote it, who Jesus is and who the apostles were. My interest was really sparked; these were things I never knew before. This was the first time I heard that God was love. My conception of God before that was that He is wrathful and if I did anything wrong, He would send me to hell. I never knew before that He was a God of forgiveness or that He loved me so much that He sent His Son to bear my sins on the cross and because of Jesus I can have eternal life. I wanted to believe this but it seemed too good to believe. I felt that I had to do something to earn my salvation. Yet I kept coming back to these Bible studies to learn more.

After I had attended five or six times someone asked me, 'Are you ready to receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour tonight?' I was scared; I had heard a lot about Jesus but I was not ready to commit my life to Him. I had to make that decision; I could not walk the fence any more. It was a scary decision because if I did accept Christ I was going to be rejected by family and friends. I felt that I was abandoning my father and my grandfather. In my culture you do not do that — you love your parents and you do whatever you can for them. You take care of them when they are older. You do everything the right way. But I had to make a decision; was I going to honour my mother or my father to the point where I was going to reject God's gift? At the end of the Bible study there was an invitation to receive Jesus. I said to myself, 'If I reject this message I am rejecting Jesus, I am rejecting God'. When I saw the testimonies of the people, how they conducted themselves, how they lived their lives according to what the Scriptures said, that ultimately made me decide that God is who He says He is. These people were genuine. Either they were telling me the truth or they were lying. It had to be one or the other, and I believed that they were telling me the truth. I was so convicted that I cried because I understood the magnitude of who Jesus is. God revealed Himself to me in the Scriptures and I received Him into my heart. I said, 'Lord, come into my life. You are who You say You are'. I made that ultimate decision that night.

After I received Christ as my Saviour my whole view point changed. I used to be selfish, always seeking how I could get ahead in life, how I

After I received Christ as my Saviour my whole view point changed

could make the most money in life. I had a lot of future goals. After I received Christ as my Saviour those things were not as important. Not that I neglect my duties as a husband or a father or as a son or brother or a friend, but my outlook on them completely changed. Now, when I do things I want to do them unto the Lord, not in my own strength or capacity but with His strength, with His capacity.

There have been many challenges in my life. In my culture family links are very strong but when you do believe in Christ you face rejection and it is very hurtful. But I am still there for my family even though I was rejected. Ultimately, my family took me back and they received me. That was the hardest part in becoming a Christian and facing rejection from your family and friends. But ultimately God can give you peace with that too.

How do I communicate with people that are from the Muslim faith? First of all, they are good people. They really have a deep respect for Allah. They are good people, they will give you anything that they have and they will share with you a piece of bread, the shirt off their back. I love Muslim people and there is no two ways about that. But my biggest prayer and my sincere advice to them is to consider who the Messiah is and who Isa (the Muslim name for Jesus) is. Look into the Scriptures. Is He who He says He is? Is He just a prophet? Did Isa actually die on the cross or did someone take His place as the Koran states? If Jesus actually died on the cross then He is the Redeemer, the Saviour, the anointed One. That is my question to Muslims: I ask them, 'Is Jesus who He says He is? Is He the Jesus of the Bible? Or is He just a prophet?' I believe He is much more than just a man. I believe that He is the Anointed One, the prophesied One, the One that was spoken about since the beginning, that was to come to give His life for the world. I believe He is going to come back again. And He will set up His kingdom. I believe that through Him we have eternal life.

Every Muslim needs Jesus as Saviour because all have fallen short of God's standard. Before I came to Christ I knew I deserved hell. I knew I was never good enough, for God is a holy God. That is why we need a Saviour. We need one who is perfect. We need one who is that perfect sacrifice. And I came to understand that Jesus Christ was that perfect sacrifice and that He willingly gave His life. That changed me. That made me see things in a way I had never seen them before. I think the world needs to know who Jesus is and truly consider it, truly consider His death, His resurrection, that He defeated sin, death and

the devil on that cross. When you comprehend that, it is a freedom that surpasses all understanding.

For 20 years I prayed for my father, I loved him dearly and I would do anything for him. My father ultimately did pass away but before he passed away they had him on feeding tubes and respirators. The only thing that was keeping him alive was machines. I remember when they pulled the plug, so to speak, and my father was going to pass away now. They gave him a couple of minutes to live because he could not breathe on his own. I remember looking at him and I said to the Lord, 'Lord, for 20 years I have been praying for this man, for 20 years I have been asking that the truth should be revealed to my father. Lord, and they are going to pull the plug on him.' They did pull the plug and I could not stand there and watch my father die. So I ran downstairs to the chapel in the hospital and I remember getting on my knees and looking up to the Lord saying, 'Lord, for 20 years I have been praying for this man, please do not let my father slip into eternity without knowing You as his Lord and Saviour'.

My sister in law came running down into the chapel, she said, 'Quick, your father is breathing on his own, he came out of his coma'. I remember a joy came over me, I grabbed a Bible and ran up to my father and shared the gospel with him about Christ and who He is and what He did on the cross. Then I said, 'Pop, do you believe what I am telling you?' He said, 'Yes, I believe'. Approximately a month later, my father passed away but the joy that came of knowing that God is faithful is overwhelming.

Ali

A Voice from the Past

PAUL'S WORK IN CORINTH AND ITS RESULTS

One of the great results of the ministry of the apostle Paul was the formation of assemblies (or churches) in the cities which he visited, of which Corinth is a striking example. Much labour was expended by the apostle in that city, and important truths were brought before those to whom he ministered, both in the preaching and by his teaching. It is recorded that he remained among them for a year and six months, teaching "the word of God."

We also find that there were great results from his ministry in Corinth, notwithstanding the contrary and difficult elements prevailing there. Take, for example, the significant opening verses of chapter 1 of the first epistle, written to them some three or four years after his time among them. Observe the striking reference to "the assembly of God which is in Corinth". This expression surely indicates one of the great results of the apostle's work in that renowned city, where the world and its glory had previously played such a conspicuous part. How wonderful that something for God—for His pleasure and glory—had in consequence developed!

Likewise to-day, it is intended that believers—those whose hearts have been affected by the glad tidings are not to remain as just so many isolated units, but are to know their place as belonging to and forming part of this wondrous vessel, the church, or assembly, of God—that which is of God and for Him. It is a blessed fact that there is something here now of which God can take account, regarding it as belonging to Himself. As He sees His people set together so as to be in some measure representative of Him, it is surely a matter of peculiar interest and value to His heart! This, indeed, was one very blessed result of the ministry of Paul in that great city of Corinth.

The apostle also laboured in giving the Corinthians to understand that their being set together was in view of affording joy to the heart of Christ. Not only were they to be together as yielding pleasure to God, but to be for Christ, understanding the truth of the church as the bride of Christ. "For", says Paul, "I am jealous as to you with a jealousy which is of God, for I have espoused you unto one man to present you a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:2). This again is a matter to be treasured by all believers—a most precious and blessed reality.

Paul had also yet more in view, for in presenting the truth in all its parts, the beloved apostle considered for the Holy Spirit; thus he had occasion to say to the Corinthians saints: "Do ye not know that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16.) Having come under his

teaching, they should have known! What a challenge to the people of God to-day! We are to understand that there is to be something also for the joy of the blessed Person of the Holy Spirit Himself, as dwelling in us. We might perhaps think of the Spirit's dwelling only in relation to the advantage it is to ourselves—how prone, alas, we are to do this—but the truth would emphasize that the saints set together as the temple of God constitute also a dwelling of the Holy Spirit—something for Him—just as we have seen that there is something for God and for Christ. The understanding of this would surely promote in us a greater measure of holiness. The beautiful and constant allusions to each of the Persons of the Godhead throughout the two Corinthian epistles, and especially the salutation at the end of the second letter, would confirm these thoughts to us: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all". May we all be further helped in the consideration of these great truths, and, as formed in them, be more truly here for divine glory!

W. B. Harris.

A word for Today

THE SECRET OF AN OVERCOMER'S POWER

The article below seems to be one of a series of addresses given by John Macdonald as a result of questions that young people asked him. On this occasion the question was:

'How are wrong habits to be corrected, especially after one has experienced discouragement by repeated failure in seeking to correct them?'

This is a question that probably every Christian, old and young, has asked at some time.

"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word." - Psalm 119:9

"Fools make a mock at sin but among the righteous there is favour." - Proverbs 19:9.

“Without me ye can do nothing.” - John 15:5

**“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” -
Philippians 4:13**

For a few days past communion has been very much on my heart and it has sprung out of the subject of last week, “Be filled with the Spirit”. There is no such thing as going on in communion without proper Christian habits. The man who does not cultivate proper habits cannot go on in communion with God the Father, nor with Christ the Son.

The first thing to start with is our own nothingness—“without me ye can do nothing”. The tendency is to have self-resolve, which issues in self-confidence, and then follows self-disappointment. I have to know that God is not expecting anything from me, nor asking a single thing from me. That is grace, and anything short of that is a mixture of grace and law.

When God took me up, He knew all about my wrong habits, and He knew I should go on for a time in self-confidence. Yet in the very face of complete knowledge of this He took me up. But a saint should not go on in a wrong course just because God has dealt with him in grace; that would be turning His grace into lasciviousness. Christians are in danger of doing that or of being legal.

After a believer has learnt that he cannot do a single thing apart from Christ, he learns that he can do every single thing that is needed as a saint, through Christ. We need to have it prayed into our inner being that there is not a single thing which crosses our path but what there is competent power in Christ Jesus to carry us through joyfully and triumphantly. Have you noticed that some of the last words which dropped from the lips of the Lord Jesus before He suffered were, “I have overcome the world?” (John 16:33). The prayer in chapter 17 is that of a Victor, of One who for others had conquered the world Himself, and thanks be to His name, in His victory we possess victory. It is ours by title; let it be ours through grace — in actuality — in our own consciences and hearts. The Lord Jesus said, “Be of good cheer, I have

overcome the world," and then He lifted up His eyes and pleaded with His Father for His own. So that there is a prayer underneath every Christian.

**Fools count
sin a very
trifling matter**

No matter how far away a believer is from God he has a prayer underneath him. Every Christian is, as it were, cradled in the prayer of Christ. The difference between Peter and Judas was this—the latter had no prayer underneath him, while Peter had. Christ said to Peter, "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not"—not that you do not fail, but that your faith do not fail; so that you may not turn round on yourself and say, 'Christ has an apostate'. There lay the germ of the restoration of a failing Peter, while Judas went and hanged himself—that is the outcome of having no prayer under a person. What a valuable thing to know that there is a prayer underneath us.

Another point is "Fools make a mock at sin." Do not let us make a mock at sin because of our security for eternity. Fools count sin a very trifling matter. Let us pray against such a condition of mind as that. We ought to get a deep sense of the gravity of sin. You never get its gravity explained, but it is expressed at the cross in that the holy and just One is put to death. There is the perfect expression of perfect love and goodness in the Person of Jesus. So Jesus died. The man who makes a mock of sin is far from God's estimate of sin. Do not trifle with it. The man who does is not in communion with God. The saint that is not in communion is not in power, and then he is the most inconsistent object on the globe. Power and holiness can never be separated—holiness and whole-heartedness go together and so do whole-heartedness and real going on in a divine way. Real going on and spiritual growth are inseparable. You cannot take in at once all that is contained in these sentences.

"Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel" (2 Samuel 15:6). That is what Satan does. And, mark you, it is not that the eternal position is altered—that is all fixed, but if my heart be stolen I cannot grow. If my heart be centred on any object other than

Christ I shall not grow. If you take my heart you take my all, so far as growth is concerned. I may have the word "communion" in my mouth, but I have not the thing itself if my heart be divided. There is no such thing as getting correct habits outside communion – I feel that point deeply. There is no such thing as either speaking or hearing to any purpose out of communion.

Whole-heartedness is another word for concentration of the affections on the Christ of God. And then the word of God comes to correct every single thing about us unsuitable to God. The word is the material which the Spirit

**If you can get on
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say frankly I cannot**

uses to correct a saint. Suppose I am reading the word and it opens up some thing to me that I have been wrong in, have I to begin to reason? No! If I take the place of subjection the word will aid me; but if I take the place of judge, it will cut me up. Hence the word of God comes in beautifully. But mark you, it is not the word of God as written on this paper. That is the ruin of many, but it is the word of God entering my soul in real Holy Ghost power and freshness as a direct communication from God for the moment. I may begin and go on with the letter of the word and be critical with it, but for that word to be effectual in me it must come to my soul as a fresh present communication from God. But that can only be explained by the Holy Ghost. The word in the heart takes all the high bearing out of us. I do not think there is anything which measures a man like lowliness of mind. Everything is to be steeped in prayer. If you can get on without prayer, I say frankly I cannot. Be very watchful against the social element; it swamps a man coming under its sway.

There are things that are quite right in their way, yet if indulged in, take the edge off one's spirit, and that is a loss, although you cannot put your finger on a single verse to say it is wrong. Hence the need of having the word steeped in prayer. Then there is a joy in the word, and a saint's very breath becomes prayer. The Lord puts a person on his mind, and he just puts up a prayer; again another person is on his mind, and again a prayer goes up.

These are the prayers which the devil hates. They are up to heaven before he can snatch them away. These are not the long prayers that Satan can get hold of at both ends. If you have anybody laid on your mind, tell God. "Thou knowest all about him". It is like presenting a cheque — it will be endorsed. All that is wanted, is to give God time. David said, "Oh, Thou that hearest prayer" (Psalm 65:2). We often say 'answers'; but the answer is His side. You put the prayer up. Leave the answer to Him—it will come in His way, according to God—what He is in Himself to us—and in all the authority of knowing that it has come from Himself. That is a wonderful thing to know.

There is no need for going on in a wrong habit. Suppose a man is doing so, he has the sense in his soul that he is not in communion, and then he is out of the conception of power and joy. He may talk about Christ, but it will not have any weight with others. What is he to do? God is the God of all encouragement. There is not a single thing that we need in the way of encouragement but what we shall find it in God. I was speaking once about smoking, and a brother said, 'I have given it up six times'. But that was done in self-resolve, which becomes self-disappointment. You dash down the pipe, and say, 'That is the last of it'; but it is not. Look at the habit as it affects God. Does this smoking go up as a sweet savour to Christ and to God? Do not look at it as your having acquired a bad habit—that is putting it on a ground where you are unable to meet it. All self-resolve and self-effort in the world will not overcome it. But get into God's presence about it, and see how He looks at it, and His power will come in communion with Him, so that the very desire for the pipe or for anything unsuitable to Him will be taken away. God will take away the taste for the habit by strengthening the taste for Himself. It is just as I get increasingly attached to Christ that I become detached from things not for Him or of Him. The former must precede the latter, or we shall become legal. Pray about the habit as it affects Christ and in so doing special grace will be given.

Turn to Romans 7:1-2. Suppose a saint in communion with God is going on with something tonight then he reads his Bible

tomorrow and finds that such habit is displeasing to God, he thereby gets his feet washed. But we must bow to the word or communion will be broken. We may have been going on with the habit all our life; but we must not make our practice or spiritual intelligence the measure of God's truth. And then comes in another difficulty, how hard many saints have to strive to earn a livelihood. It seems as though they have no time for studying the Bible and for prayer; but they have to make time for these things, for we cannot get on without them. I trust that we shall not lose the sense of the difficulties of such saints. Take a mother with several children and each one with a bundle of wants from morning to night. She is drained completely, and we must be very careful not to misjudge such.

In Hebrews 4:16, we come to the throne of grace boldly, not cringingly—not to ask for either mercy or grace, but to get both. The importance of being at the throne of grace is that you get something there which you would not possess if you did not go there and it would save you from falling into bad habits, and if in them, restore you from them.

In Galatians 5:16 we read, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall in no way fulfil flesh's lust". You see we are back to communion again. What is so painful is to find how fitfully we may go on. The saint who is not going on will find that he is being checked by things which, if he were walking with God, would be instrumental in lifting him up. Such things instead of being "elevators" are "sinkers". "Love not the world". It is as natural for the new life to go on with God and the things of God, as it is for the old nature to go on with the evil. So that it is necessary to look at the positive side in communion.

John Macdonald (1840 - 1926)