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**MASTER, CAREST THOU NOT
THAT WE PERISH?**

THE EXERCISE OF PRAYER

JESUS AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD

PEACE AT ANY PRICE?

NEVERTHELESS AFTERWARD

THE FRUIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

RIVERS OF LIVING WATER

**THE TESTIMONY OF MILTON & MARJORIE HAACK
(MISSIONARIES TO THE PHILIPPINES)**

July—August 2009

Master, carest thou not that we perish?

Matthew, Mark and Luke all record the Lord's calming of the storm as they crossed Galilee. Matthew describes the circumstances this way, "And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but He was asleep." (Matt. 8:24). Mark puts it, "And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full." (Mark 8:37). And Luke records the event as, "but as they sailed He fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake: and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy." (Luke 8:23). The writers all agree, they were in, to say the least, difficult circumstances.

There are variations however in the disciples' call to the Lord. Matthew says they addressed Him as "Lord." Mark says they addressed Him as "Master" or "Teacher." Luke says they called Him "Master, Mas-

ter" or "Overseer" or "Superintendent." We can only speculate as to the reason these differences occur. Perhaps the disciples called on the Lord three different times and used different titles each time. Or perhaps they all called out to Him at once, different titles used by different disciples. Whatever the reason these differences teach us a lesson.

Matthew uses the word, "Lord" acknowledging His authority. Mark uses the word "Master" emphasizing His knowledge. Luke uses the word for 'Overseer' stressing His awareness of the situation. But implicit in their call was doubt about the Lord. This expression of faithlessness was gently rebuked by Him in His questioning of their faith.

From Matthew we learn they doubted His ability. "Lord, save us: we perish." (8:25). There was some question in their minds that He could not save. We should never doubt the Lord's ability in our storms. There is nothing too hard for the Lord. He is the omnipotent One. Winds and the sea still obey Him. If you are facing today what seems an impossible set of circumstances, never doubt Him and His ability and power. He is Lord of every circumstance without exception. Our fear comes from little faith in Him.

From Mark we learn they doubted His affection. "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" They did not doubt His role as a teacher. He taught as no other. They questioned however,

did He really care about them? The Lord is not like earthly teachers. An earthly teacher may have great knowledge (although none of course could compare with the Lord) yet have little or no care for the student. The Lord however is completely different. He knows, but He cares too. Peter encourages us, "Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you." (1 Pet. 5:7) Never doubt His affection for you. In fact such affection has allowed the circumstances you find yourself in. If He did not think you would benefit from them, He would not have allowed them. "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth" (Heb. 1:6).

From Luke we learn they doubted His awareness. "Master, [Overseer] Master, we perish" Did not the overseer know? Was He not aware of the seriousness of their predicament? Of course He did. He is never unaware. While earthly friends may be unable to comprehend our circumstances, the Lord is always fully aware. He is more aware than we are ourselves. Never think the Lord has forgotten you. His silence and His apparent delays should not be misinterpreted. Do not jump to the conclusion that God does not know. We can rest in the confidence of His unchangeable love and unlimited knowledge. He knows when and how to act. He is aware of you today.

If you are in a storm do not fail to trust Him. It was their lack of faith the Lord rebuked. They should have known He was in control. He is able He is the Lord. He cared for them in every way. He is the Master teacher who not only knows but cares. He is the great Overseer and will move at precisely the right time. Trust Him today.

Brian Gunning
St. Catharines, Ontario





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The *Exercise* of Prayer

"Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 2:1).



It is a great wonder that God has made prayer so easy to perform and so suitable to the powers, skills, and opportunities of every man, and made the exercise of prayer to have great effects and be productive of such great blessing. But it may be

**“We can take
our spiritual
temperature from
our prayer life.”**

a still greater wonder that we who are given this privilege should be so unwilling to use an instrument for procuring so much good.

That prayer is so productive belongs to God's goodness; that we are so unwilling to pray belongs to our folly and weakness. It is strange to find within ourselves so much difficulty to perform a condition so easy and yet so full of advantage.

At times we do not know what to ask. When we do know what to ask, we find difficulty in bringing our wills to desire that for which we should ask. Or again, sometimes, like Korah, we bring unhallowed

censers into the holy presence of God so that our hearts send up an unholy smoke or cloud out of the fires of unholy desires and fleshly lusts. We must remember that God can never accept a prayer unless it be a holy offering—that is, that it have a lawful end—that it be for

“Pray with “perseverance” that is, pray no matter what occurs to discourage us from the exercise.”

the glory of God—that it be offered with zeal and love, sorrow or joy—and that it rise out of a sanctified life and a pure heart. It may be the lack of these qualities which so hinders the exercise of prayer. We are not fit most of the time for this holy office. There are many young believers, too, who do not understand the necessity of prayer for the developing of spiritual life and the usefulness of it to procure great blessing. But our spiritual state never rises higher than our measure of prayer. We can take our spiritual temperature from our prayer life. We can measure our spiritual growth by it. We are really what we are when alone before God and nothing else. We may sweat in preaching and serving but if we are cold toward God and have no desire for communion with Him then our service is but a poor thing indeed.

Prayer is natural to a believer. As soon as Saul of Tarsus was converted the Lord summed up his conversion to Ananias in that pregnant little phrase— *“Behold, he prayeth”* (Acts 9:11). Prayer is communion with God—cooperation with God in His purposes—intercession before God on behalf of others—and an instrument of warfare against spiritual intelligences which war

against the soul. In Ephesians 6:18 the apostle admonishes believers to pray always that is, to be always in a praying frame of mind and heart so that we miss no season when there is need for the exercise and to pray with *“all prayer”*—that is, with all sorts of prayer such as public, fam-

ily, ejaculatory, private, ordinary, or extraordinary prayer—and to pray in the Spirit—that is not with the lip and tongue only but with the assistance of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:26)—and to pray with *“watchfulness”*—that is, not to fall into a sluggish and sleepy spirit as the disciples in the garden— and to pray with *“perseverance”* that is, pray no matter what occurs to discourage us from the exercise.

There are certain parts to the exercise of prayer. We should always come before God with confession—confessing sins of omission and commission. Confession clears the ground as a farmer would his land of weeds. This is to be done honestly and most freely and not to have such failures squeezed out of us since God is absolute in His holiness there should always be in us a sense of sorrow and shame for having failed so much and with purpose of heart to do better. Prayer: as distinguished from worship and praise, is simply asking for things—that is to desire from God the supply of our needs and to ask for that good on our own behalf or on behalf of others. But in this asking there must be a conscious movement of the soul toward God—a lifting up of the heart in

earnest to Him. Just the recital of a few well chosen words without any devotion to the Lord is not prayer before God but only the carcass of prayer. Prayer is petition. Then, thirdly, prayer should have in it the element of thanksgiving. There are spiritual mercies for which we ought to be expressly thankful—such as the forgiveness of sins, assurance of acceptance, adoption into God's family, the gift of eternal life, and the hope of glory. These good and eternal things should bring forth our warmest thanks. Then there are temporal mercies which we have experienced from the womb. Is not ingratitude frowned upon by men of the world and considered a scandal which makes ungrateful souls odious to them? How much greater is ingratitude to God for such abundant mercies which have been given us out of His bountiful hand!

But what do we believe about prayer—that is, concerning its use and value? Do we believe prayer can accomplish anything at all? We are not to imagine that the value of prayer is merely subjective. That is what our medical doctor may tell

“We are really what we are when alone before God and nothing else.”

us—that is, that prayer will do us good and calm the spirit, settle the nerves, and maybe put a shine upon our face as it did with Moses (Exod. 34:29). That is degrading to God as though He does not hear and answer prayer—that He does not de-

sire communion and cooperation of His people—that He does not give what the suppliant asks. Listen to the words of the Lord Jesus—*“If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you;”* and in John 14:14—*“If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it.”*

To whom, ask some, are we to

“ If we had to go before a great king to make request we would try to work out the right and proper manner of setting forth that request. How much more before God!”

pray? I would judge that when we make petition we are to address the Father (Matt. 6:5-15). It is quite proper to address the Son, our Saviour, with praise and thanksgiving for what He has accomplished on our behalf. Nowhere in the Scriptures are we to address the Holy Spirit directly, but we are to exercise prayer through His energy and life-giving assistance. We are not to pray in any other name than the name of the Lord Jesus. No prayer is to be made to God in the name of Mary—Krishna—Buddha—Mohammed—or any other creature. Such prayers are vain and do not ascend higher than the roof of the mouth. It is like a cloud hugging a mountain—it will ascend while it hugs the thing but when it leaves the mountain it will fall to earth again by the weight of its own pollution. It is only the blood of Christ which can remove that pollution and make prayer to rise to God as a sweet-smelling incense.

To encourage us in the exercise there is given to us in the Word of

God the histories of men and women who have been mighty in prayer. The Lord Jesus Himself, in the days of His flesh, is our best example. He often retired into the wilderness or ascended up into a mountain to pray. He sometimes continued all night in prayer and prayed at times with such fervency that His sweat was as drops of blood. Then, also, the most

eminent of the saints are set forth as men and women of prayer. We read of Abraham's pleading with God for any righteous there might have been in Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 18)—of Jacob's wrestling at the river Jabbok (Gen. 32:24-28)—of David's prayer in the morning, then extending it to evening, morning and noon, and then to seven times a day (Pss. 5; 55; 119)—of Daniel's prayers when he kneeled on his knees three times each day in spite of the king's decree forbidding it—of Paul's great prayers in Ephesians and Colossians—of Cornelius' prayers and Peter's prayers in Acts 10. What great mercies have been obtained by mighty prayer! What divine wrath has been averted! What judgments of God have been removed by men and women who knew the mighty power of prayer!

There is no exercise that is so prevailing and so soul-enriching as prayer. What an addition it is to the history of the saints. As grass, herbs and flowers flourish with the dew of

heaven so do souls with the blessing of God through prayer. Oh what refreshment there is in prayer to God! But let us come to the place of prayer with such a spirit that nothing will impede its effects. Prayer will not take effect if it rises out of an angry spirit which is a storm in the spirit—a fire in the face—a temporary madness—a sword in the hand to slay any effect of prayer. Indifference or easiness of desire will be a great enemy of a good man's prayer, for a lukewarm prayer is loathsome to God. Lack of perseverance will hinder prayer as will praying by chance of humor or fancy.

Only God is qualified to deal with our prayers. Catholic priests tell their people to pray to Mary. But Mary is but a human person and such a person cannot be in two places at once. Even if Mary could hear a prayer—which she cannot—she could only hear one person's prayer. Only God is omnipresent and can hear the prayers of all people in every place. Only God is omniscient and can interpret the prayers which are often confused—feeble—broken. And only God can read them and put them into His heavenly file—answering them at the right time with suitable answers. We cannot breathe a sincere prayer in the spirit without God hearing it. We cannot lift up our eyes to heaven without God observing it. He sees and hears and will open His hand and His heart for our eternal benefit and good. God is everywhere. He is present in a cathedral but also in a garden and on an open moor. You can pray anywhere and in every place for God is present in all places.

Here let me say a word to wives of Christian husbands and children of Christian fathers. There is a danger of leaving all prayer to the husband

or father—and that mostly limited to family prayer. I have seen many wives and children fall away after the passing of a godly husband or father simply because they themselves have not built up a personal prayer life and have no such history with God. Each of us needs our own prayer life—the husband apart from the wife—the wife apart from the husband—the child apart from the parent. Each needs to feel the relish—taste the deliciousness—be refreshed with the comfort—fortified with the strength—and acquainted with the secrets of private prayer. For this exercise there is need for purity of spirit, purity of intention, and purity of body and soul. We

“For this exercise there is need for purity of spirit, purity of intention, and purity of body and soul.”

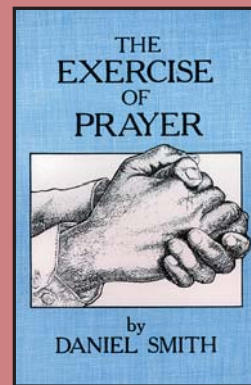
must approach God with no vice remaining and no affection for sin—but with a holy life so that there may rise from our hearts a holy prayer.

Our Lord, in teaching His disciples to pray, gave them a form of prayer which we call “The Lord’s Prayer.” He said to them— *“After this manner pray ye”*—that is, after this style. They needed direction in prayer. If we had to go before a great king to make request we would try to work out the right and proper manner of setting forth that request. How much more before God! The prodigal son, when he came to himself and purposed to return to his father, thought beforehand what he

should say to his father (Luke 15:18). The Lord gave His disciples a form of prayer, but it was never intended to be a set form of prayer to reiterate over and over. It was only given as a pattern to direct us in prayer. It was given to the disciples in a known tongue—their own tongue. Our Lord Himself never used it—nor did the apostles. There is also diversity in the prayer between Matthew and Luke. Matthew says— *“Give us this day our daily bread”*—which is one day’s supply. Luke says— *“day by day”*— which is a continual supply. Luke also leaves out the doxology which Matthew records— *“for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.”*

Prayer is very pleasing to God. He desires to hear our voice as we see in the Song of Solomon 2:14. Praying people are His peculiar treasure—His most precious gems—and richly blessed of God. It is their everlasting honor and they shall have everlasting reward for their prayers. The good name of a man or woman of prayer is better far than the great name of a public preacher who is cold and dead in private prayers. Oh let us covet this above all things—to be men and women who know how to enter the holy of holies where God’s presence is—to know how to address Him with reverence and godly fear—to be assured on what grounds we can make our requests —and to do so with a fervent and unweary spirit.

DANIEL SMITH



The Exercise of Prayer

Daniel Smith

X-EOP

Prayer is natural to a believer. As soon as Saul of Tarsus was converted the Lord summed up his conversion to Ananias in that pregnant little phrase— *“Behold, he prayeth”* (Acts 9:11). Though prayer is the natural outflow of life, yet we still need encouragement and training in this basic exercise. With the disciples we plead, *“Lord, teach us to pray.”* In this book Dan Smith responds to the many requests for help in prayer, both teaching and demonstrating patterns of prayer. The prayer given to the disciples by our Lord was a pattern, not a form. It was a pattern of brevity, order, and matter. The disciples never used it as a form, in the same exact words, but rather, *“after this manner.”*

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JESUS at the RIGHT Hand of GOD.

The writer to the Hebrews more or less closes what we have as the first chapter of his epistle with the rhetorical question, “To which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand...?”¹

To the writer and his readers the obvious—and only—answer is “None.” And the writer makes this clear by immediately saying of the angels in verse 14, “Are they not all ministering² spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”

In the ancient world, for someone to sit at another’s right hand was to occupy the position of the very highest honour and eminence.³

When the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus described the seating arrangements in the camp of Israel’s

King Saul, he recorded that “*there sat by him (King Saul) his son Jonathan at his right hand, and Abner, the captain of his host, at his other hand*.”⁴ And scripture tells us that, when “*Bathsheba went unto King Solomon to speak unto him for Adonijah...the king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and he caused a seat (“throne”, literally) to be set for the king’s mother; and she sat at his right hand*.”⁵

Again, the Roman historian Suetonius informs us that when Tiridates, king of Armenia, visited Emperor Nero in AD 62, the emperor gave Tiridates a seat at his right hand in the theatre as a token of respect and honour.⁶

But we rejoice to know that our Lord Jesus is not seated at the right hand, either of any monarch in Israel or monster in Rome—for monster Nero certainly was.

No, indeed. Chapter 8 of this very epistle opens by speaking of our Lord as “*set at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty (of “the Greatness”) in the heavens*.”⁷ And it is unthinkable that any angel should presume to sit in that place of supreme dignity and honour. It is not that angels cannot sit—but that they cannot sit there!

For we know that angels certainly can sit. We read, for example, of the time when an “*angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone (the “very great stone”⁸ from the entrance to our Lord’s tomb, that is)... and sat upon it*.”⁹

In the last chapter of his gospel, Mark informs us that, when the women from Galilee arrived on the scene, they saw an angel, in appearance as a young man. “*Entering into the sepulchre*”, Mark says, “*they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted*.”¹⁰ Later in the same chapter, Mark tells us that “*after the Lord had spoken unto them (the disciples), he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God*.”¹¹

We can hardly miss the contrast which Mark strikes in chapter 16, telling us first that the (seeming) “*young man*” was “*sitting on the right side*” of the tomb, whereas “*the Lord ...was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God*”. Indeed, the Greek word¹² translated “*right side*” is the same as that translated “*right hand*”. Mark is telling us that an angel could sit at “*the right hand*” of the tomb; but that no angel could ever

1 Compare the other rhetorical question he asks in the context of our Lord’s superiority to the angels; ‘unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son...?’, Heb. 1. 5.

2 Λειτουργικα.

3 The ancient world made a careful distinction of the relative value of being at a person’s right or left hand. See, for instance, Joseph’s reaction when his father Jacob crossed his hands and placed his left hand on the head of Joseph’s firstborn, Gen. 48. 13-19. Similarly, we note that, in our Lord’s account of the coming judgement of the nations, where the goats (the ‘cursed’) are set at the left hand of the Son of man and the sheep (the ‘blessed’) are set at His right hand, Matt. 25. 31-46. Note further the words of Psalm 45. 9, addressed to the King, ‘upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir’, and of Psalm 80. 17, ‘Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself’.

4 ‘The Antiquities of the Jews’, Book VI, Chapter XI, Section 9. Cf. 1 Sam. 20. 25.

5 1 Kings 2. 19.

6 Suetonius: ‘De Vita Caesarum’, section XIII. See too Edward Champlin, ‘Nero’, pg. 75.

7 Heb. 8. 1.

8 Mark 16. 4.

9 Matt. 28. 2.

10 Mark 16. 5.

11 Mark 16. 19.

12 Δεξις.

sit at “the right hand of God”!

We find that angels could both foretell and announce our Lord’s coming into the world.¹³ An angel could minister to Him following His temptations in the wilderness.¹⁴ An angel could strengthen Him during His agony in the garden.¹⁵ An angel could make known His resurrection.¹⁶ And angels could witness His ascension.¹⁷ But no angel could—or can—ever sit where He is now sitting.

According to the closing verses of Hebrews chapter 1, only God’s Son “sits”. The angels are just “sent”; “sent forth to minister (to render service) for them who shall be heirs of salvation.”

The gospels speak of several occasions when our Lord sat while He was in the world.

We read, for example, that, when He was twelve years old, Mary and Joseph “found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions”.¹⁸ Just think of that for a moment. The very Lord of hosts, who the prophet Isaiah had once seen in his great temple/palace vision of chapter 6 “sitting upon a throne”, accompanied by the seraphim, with the train of His robe filling the heavenly temple¹⁹ is now found sitting on some seat,²⁰ surrounded by a group of Jewish teachers, in the earthly temple.

Again we read in John 4 that He came to “Jacob’s well ... Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus

(sat just as He was) on the well”.²¹

And again we read that our Lord later “sat over against the (Temple) treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury”.²²

Yes, when in the world, our Lord Jesus sat to hear, to rest and to observe. And one day He will return to the world in glory, when, in the imagery of Revelation 19, heaven (which opened on Him when He was in the world²³) will open for

“In the ancient world, for someone to sit at another’s right hand was to occupy the position of the very highest honour and eminence.”

Him, and then He will come forth, seated on a white horse, followed by the armies of heaven.²⁴

But today He is seated where no angel has ever sat, or ever will sit.

The apostles Paul and Peter stress this most clearly. For his part, Paul speaks in Ephesians 1 of the exertion of God’s “mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised Him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion”.²⁵

And, for his part, Peter speaks at the close of chapter 3 of his first letter

of “the resurrection of Jesus Christ: who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him”.²⁶

But we remind ourselves that the Saviour sits at God’s right hand, not only by virtue of God’s personal invitation (“sit at my right hand”), but also by virtue of His own completed work.

For it is, we are told at the beginning of Hebrews chapter 1, as having purged (made purification for) sins, that our Lord Jesus “sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high”.²⁷ It is, we are told at the beginning of chapter 12, as having endured the cross, despising the shame, that our Lord Jesus has sat down “at the right hand of the throne of God”.²⁸ And it is, we are told in chapter 10, as having “offered one sacrifice for sins for ever”, that “this man ... sat down on the right hand of God”.²⁹

Make no mistake, no angelic being will ever receive a divine invitation to sit where the Lord Jesus sits—in the place of supreme dignity and honour—for no angelic being has accomplished (nor could have accomplished) what He did for us at the cross.

13 Matt. 1. 20-23; Luke 1. 26-37; 2. 10-12.

14 Matt. 4. 11.

15 Luke 22. 43.

16 Matt. 28. 5-7; Mark 16. 5-7; Luke 24. 4-7.

17 Acts 1. 9-11.

18 Luke 2. 46.

19 Isa. 6. 1-3.

20 The hearers sat on the ground, at the feet of the teachers who were themselves seated’, I Howard Marshall, ‘The Gospel of Luke’ in the New International Greek Testament Commentary, on Luke 2. 45-46.

21 John 4. 5-6.

22 Mark 12. 41. Compare also Matt. 9. 10; 13. 1-2; 15. 29; 24. 3; 26. 7, 20; 26. 55; Mark 2. 15; 9. 35; 11. 7; Luke 4. 20; John 6. 3; 8. 2.

23 Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:21.

24 Rev. 19. 11, 14.

25 Eph. 1. 20-21.

26 1 Pet. 3. 22.

27 Heb. 1. 3.

28 Heb. 12. 2.

29 That our Lord Jesus is now at the right hand of God is the certain proof that every question raised by the sins of His people has been forever settled.

Malcolm Horlock
Cardiff, UK

PEACE at Any PRICE?

Today there is a great movement throughout the world to unify politically and religiously. The United Nations seems to wield ever greater influence around the world with its educational programs and its attempts to arbitrate disputes between nations.

In the religious realm these same influences are discernable. In 1994 an ecumenical agreement was published entitled "Evangelicals and Catholics Together: the Christian Mission in the Third Millennium." Tragically, some leading figures in the evangelical community, support and encourage links with Rome, and this must be avoided at all costs. The proclamation stated that both Catholics and evangelicals were brothers and discouraged evangelism among Catholics by Protestants. Lutheran clerics are among those who now state that the Reformation was a mistake. The church should have remained as one under the leadership of the Pope. The differences were negligible, largely a matter of semantics. Martin Luther would be amazed at what is happening today.

The Hutterites believe in communal living and trace their roots back to the Reformation and the Anabaptists.

"In mid-October, for the first time since our Hutterian forebears broke with Roman Ca-

tholicism (and lost hundreds of members through the severe persecution that followed 450 years ago), a cardinal visited an Anabaptist community. Stopping by Woodcrest Bruderhof for a short but intensive visit, New York's Cardinal John O'Connor was greeted with a rendition of Schubert's Credo, afterwards, Christoph Arnold, our elder, welcomed him and spoke briefly about the significance of the occasion: One

thing that is very much on our hearts today are the words of Jesus, 'A new commandment I give you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you... By this all men will know that you are my disciples...' (John 13:34-35). With you, brother John, we also want to take to heart the words of Hebrews 10:24: "Let us consider how we may spur one another towards love and good deeds. That is our prayer."¹

The Cardinal responded warmly,

"Let us explore together in

¹ The Plough, Nov/Dec, 1996, p.2

the time God gives us ... Let us explore how we can come closer in faith and in love to spread the Kingdom of God on earth."²

Many would say, "Isn't that lovely! What a display of Christian love and acceptance. Did you hear him call the Cardinal 'brother.' Can't we all get along together?"

Why did the Anabaptists leave the Catholic Church over 400 years ago and why were they slaughtered by the thousands? Was it just a personality clash, a sad misunderstanding? Those who have studied Reformation history know it was over a deep doctrinal difference. The Reformers were convinced that salvation was instantaneous when a sinner repented and received Christ as Lord and Savior. It was all of God's grace; Christ's death was enough.

"It is time once again to affirm the importance of doctrine. What you believe is important. It will determine whether you go to heaven or hell."

The Catholics insisted that salvation was a long process of God's grace working through the church and in the life of the individual. It began with infant Baptism, was confirmed at Confirmation, and enabled by grace through Confession, the Mass, Marriage and finally Extreme Unction. The process continued in Purgatory where the soul must still have further cleansing, aided by the prayers and Masses said by the living. This teaching is a far cry from the preaching of the Reformers and it is still the teaching of Rome today.

² (p. 3).

It is a religion of works.

The Anabaptists further rejected infant baptism, insisting baptism was to follow an understanding and acceptance of the gospel. They also believed in going back to the model of the early church where each congregation was made up of professing believers. They rejected the concept of a state church with all the citizens of a country being viewed as Christians. Has Rome changed?

die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins" (John 8:24 NKJV). The truth of the gospel, salvation by grace through faith, must be proclaimed fearlessly. There is no room for tolerance here. Paul could say, *"If anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed"* (Gal. 1:9).

Genuine love is never divorced from truth. At the cross, *"Mercy and*

that we should be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive, but speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ" (Eph. 4:14-15).

Christians should be loving people with compassion for all men and women, regardless of race or religion. But in his loving concern he

“Christians should be loving people with compassion for all men and women, regardless of race or religion. But in his loving concern he must tell them the gospel, for there is no other way of salvation.”

Has its doctrinal position on salvation become the same as that of the Reformers and of evangelicals today? Not at all. And the Pope is still viewed as the head of the church with immense power and authority. Luther rightly saw from scripture, that the Roman Catholic system and its figureheads, would be major contributors to the Antichrist System, in the days prior to the second advent of the Lord, and would share in its destruction under God. He pulled no punches in his writing and preaching.

So why are so many today opening their arms to Rome and saying we are all brothers. Forget doctrinal differences; they only tend to divide Christians. Let's show love and call them our brothers. It is time once again to affirm the importance of doctrine. What you believe is important. It will determine whether you go to heaven or hell. Jesus said, *"Therefore I said to you that you will*

truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Ps. 85:10). God's love and righteousness embrace at the cross. No wonder Paul could say, *"But God forbid that I should glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Gal. 6:14).

It is believing the truth that saves a believer. It is also truth that will sanctify him and make him a godly

“To minimize truth is to commit spiritual suicide.”

person. Jesus prayed, *"Sanctify them by your truth. Your word is truth"* (John 17:17). To minimize truth is to commit spiritual suicide. Jude pleads with us to *"contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints"* (Jude 3). Paul expresses his deep concern for believers, *"...*

must tell them the gospel, for there is no other way of salvation (Acts 4:12). He realizes that until they are saved and part of God's family, they are not brothers and are not to be treated as children of God. It is unloving to treat a person on his way to hell as a brother in the Lord. He desperately needs to hear that he is lost and needs the Savior.

Away then with all this pious, ecumenical talk of all being children of God. Jesus said, *"You are of your father, the devil"* (John 8:44) and it is still true that most people belong to Satan's family, not God's. The Lord's cry still is, *"Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord"* (2 Cor. 6:17). And as God's children we are exhorted, *"Buy the truth and do not sell it"* (Prov. 23:23), good words for today.

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Nevertheless Afterward

This day before the sun goes down, in many lands the anguished cry, “Why, O why?” will rise like Noah’s dove into what seems to be an unresponsive and foreboding sky, only to return without a leaf of hope.

The infant son of a lovely Christian couple goes missing and the little form is later found floating at the bottom of a swimming pool. A beautiful young sister is abducted from the street, assaulted and killed, and the perpetrators of this monstrous act are never apprehended. A young husband, driving home from a conference, is killed by a drunken driver. A successful businessman, saved later in life, dedicates his experience to help the Lord’s workers. He severs profitable connections on the basis of his newfound principles. He turns down lucrative business because his services would indirectly be used by his customers to produce materials that would grieve his Lord and violate his sense of decency. He suffers major financial losses.

A quick and easy answer to such sufferers would only be a mockery. To toss out a piece of sentimental poetry or quote a truth never experienced by the well-intentioned consoler would be unfeeling and thoughtless.

A cheery shout down into the pit, calling Joseph to “Have a good day!” would hardly have comforted this young man. But the Lord had a plan for his release. Though he may not have felt it, “the Lord was with him” and there was “nevertheless” a wonderful “afterward.”

Job’s three friends did visit him

when he lost everything. Yet their words only served to plunge Job deeper into despair. But the Lord had a plan for his restoration. For Job, that meant a wonderful turn of events, and for God’s people a commentary on the mystery of suffering, the ministry of the Lord and the maliciousness of Satan.

Jonah sinned by disobedience. Off he goes to escape his responsibility. But the Lord had a plan for his recovery. Not quite what Jonah expected. Miraculously, a wind, a whale and a weed were prepared, all to teach His failing servant a lesson on the great value of souls to God. Then, where sin abounded, grace did much more abound and he became the only sign the Saviour would ever give to His enemies, of His death, burial and resurrection.

What words could ever have brought comfort to that bereaved home in Bethany? What answers for the helplessness of watching their beloved brother slipping away while anguished prayers seemingly were not being heard? Death breaks in at last and in Bethany can be heard the moan of the mourning and the sob of the sorrowing. Why did the Lord not come? But the Lord had a plan for a resurrection! Mary and Martha so urgently wanted a miracle, a sick Lazarus kept alive. But far above and beyond the uncertain pulse of little Bethany, the tears of weeping sisters and a corrupting corpse in the grave, there was an eternal purpose, the glory of the Son of God and a new life to many who would believe.

Well and good, those incidents do

throw a shaft of light in our darkness ... at times, but there are sorrows, tragedies, personal pains and perplexities that seemingly have no answer down here. Some burst into our blue skies like a hurricane and leave us desolate in the ruins of all our hopes. Others with slow attrition gnaw at our endurance, draw daily upon the emotions and drain the strength from our will and our questionings afflict us with guilt.

What now? Does the Lord have a wonderful plan for me? No Joseph nor Jonah, no Martha nor Mary here, just one of the “nobodies” of life. Yes, dear saint in the trial, the Lord does have a plan, not necessarily for release, restoration or recovery, but the Lord has a plan for reward.

The answer for many sorrows will never be found down here. Though “manifold” be the trial, it is not forever, it is “for a season.” The trial is temporal. In God’s mysterious dealings with us, the trial is needful, “if need be.” In the balances of eternity, the trial is valuable, “more precious than of gold that perisheth.”

All who have thus suffered the trial of their faith, not only by pain and distress, but also by patient endurance, will receive “praise”, the divine approbation. They will be given “honour,” a suitable reward and they will be granted the radiant “glory” of a reigning rank in the kingdom of the Lord in whose Name they suffered and for whose sake they endured.

J. Boyd Nicholson



The FRUIT of RIGHTEOUSNESS

God has always been looking for the fruit of righteousness in His people of old. It delighted His heart to see them bring forth such fruit, because it was a reflection of His holy character in them. Likewise in this day of grace He expects more godliness and Christ likeness in us, for that is what this fruit speaks of. And it still delights His heart to see it in our lives.

Four times in the Scriptures we read of the fruit of righteousness. Once in the OT and three times in the NT. (In Phil. 1:11 the proper reading is FRUIT in singular).

In this short meditation we will briefly consider these four references.

1. *“For ye have turned justice (judgment) into gall and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock” (Amos 6:12).*

In those sad days of Amos the people of Israel, especially those in the Northern kingdom, had departed from the LORD their God and sought after other gods. They had set up their idolatrous religion in Bethel and Dan. Over and above that they practiced social injustice whereby the rich were crushing the poor, (4:1, and 8:4-6). There was also an abhorable moral decay in their lives manifested in consumerism and material indulgences, (6:3-6).

Amos, a simple man from among the herdsmen of Tekoa in Southern Judah was sent by God to them with a serious message. It contained an invitation to repent and turn back to the LORD and seek Him, (5:5-6).

The message also contained a clear

warning of a coming judgment from the LORD, (5:6). Furthermore the LORD accuses them, in light of their moral and spiritual breakdown, of turning sweet justice into wormwood and leaving off righteousness in the earth, (5:7). He sums up their poor status by saying *“Ye have turned justice into gall and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock”* (6:12). While Jehovah expected the sweet

“That fruit is not meant to draw attention to ourselves. It should be entirely unto the praise and glory of God.”

fruit of righteousness and justice to be brought forth by the people who were called by His name, He only found the bitterness of idolatry, moral decay and social injustice. How it must have hurt His heart of love, kindness and compassion, not to see any of these lovely characters reflected in His people.

In the days of our Lord’s sojourn on earth He addressed the leaders of the people much in the same terms. *“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, justice, mercy and faith; these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the others undone”* (Matt. 23:23).

How about us in this day of grace? How do we feel about the weak and the poor in the flock? Do our hearts go out to them both in their spiritual

and their material need? Or are we indifferent to their plight? Shouldn’t we recognize our duty to the weak and damaged lambs of Christ? Paul writing to the Thessalonians says *“Now we exhort you, brethren, ... encourage the fainthearted (margin), support the weak, be patient toward all men”* (1 Thess. 5:14).

May the Lord give us caring tender hearts so that we would be consider-

ate of the afflictions of our brothers and sisters, (James 2:15-16) and do our best to alleviate their sufferings.

2. *“And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense. Being filled with the fruit (margin) of righteousness, which is by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God” (Phil. 1:9-11).*

This is one of Paul’s prison prayers. Here he supplicates the Lord on behalf of the Philippian believers. He prays that their love may abound yet more and more. In the original, the word used for love here is the “agape” love; it describes a love that originates in the heart of God. It is a sacrificial, selfless love that cares deeply for its loved ones. It is so un-



like the world's concept of love which only seeks its own. It is a love that is shed abroad in the believers' hearts by the Holy Spirit, Romans 5:5. Here it is likened unto a mighty river that can overflow its boundaries.

Yet this love needs to be guarded by a wholesome measure of knowledge, (v.9), the source of which is necessarily the word of God. This should not be just mere head knowledge, which puffs up, but an experiential acquaintance with the Word; whereby the believer has already lived it out in his day to day walk. Such knowledge will equip the child of God with a tender moral tact in dealing with others; here referred to as "all judgment". Thus the original exuberance of enthusiastic love, so characteristic of the new believers in Christ would be tempered and mel- lowed by a sensitive but more mature judgment of older believers.

And if such balanced state, of love combined with knowledge prevails among us we will have our moral and spiritual perception sharpened so that we can discern things that differ. For this is what is meant here by the words of the apostle "That ye may approve things that are excellent" (v.10). In Hebrews 5:14 we read "But strong meat (solid food) belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil".

This ability to discern things that differ should not give us a sense of personal superiority, but should teach us humility and cause us to be sincere, transparent and without guile or hypocrisy, (v.10). This in turn will guard against us becoming stumbling blocks for others until the day of Christ when our Lord will come again and assess our life's work for Him, (v.10).

What sweet fruit of righteousness

will then fill our lives thus delight- ing our heavenly Father! This in es- sence is the work of the Holy Spirit reproducing Christ in us. And in- deed we ought to realize that we cannot, in our own power, achieve such goal. This is only possible "by Jesus Christ" (v.11), as He lives His life in us, (Gal. 2: 20).

er who is endowed with knowledge behave? He is not expected to flaunt his knowledge in order to gain a superior standing, nor is he to par- take of the activity of envying and strife. But he is to show in a practi- cal manner a life lived in meekness and wisdom, full of good works to the glory of God. It is so easy to be

“Agape love—describes a love that originates in the heart of God. It is a sacrificial, selfless love that cares deeply for it’s loved ones.”

Furthermore that fruit is not meant to draw attention to ourselves. It should be entirely unto the praise and glory of God (v.11).

3. *“Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness and wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife are, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by them that make peace”* (Jas. 3:13-18).

This passage deals with a regrettable but not an infrequent occurrence in the local assembly, namely the presence of rivalry between believers. And if indeed such a situation existed, how should the wise broth-

er caught up in "party spirit" which divides and scatters the people of God. But a spiritual believer should recognize such tendency and refrain from it. The Scripture here warns against glorying in such activity, for this glorying would be tantamount to lying against the truth.

James goes on to describe the source and character of the (so called) wisdom that promotes striving and envying as a life style. As to its source it could not have descended from above that is to say from God Himself, (v. 15). It is patterned after the course of this world which glories in self-exultation and adversarial behavior, it is therefore earthy in character, (v. 15). It is sensual pandering to human sinful instincts of pride and self-satisfaction, for it results in drawing disciples unto oneself. This will end up dividing God's people into factions and cliques. Its real source is the devil, (v. 15), for, like him, it is willful and acts in rebellion against God. Where this philosophy prevails there is confusion and every evil work (v. 16). Needless to say

such behavior should not be even named among the people of God.

By contrast the wisdom which is from above i.e. Divine in origin, is pure for it finds its source in God who is light and in whom is no darkness at all, (1 Jn.1:5). It is conducive to peace and does not promote strife, and because it starts with the God of all peace it is therefore peaceable. Characterized by gentleness it never resorts to harshness or rudeness, (see Phil. 4:5). It does not promote stubbornness, prejudice or strong-mindedness. If a believer is so inclined he will be easy to be entreated; he will not be one who takes a stand and not budge from it, always willing to change his mind if so convinced of the truth, (v. 17).

God who delights in mercy is honored by such wisdom because it is full of mercy and manifests itself in good fruits, (v. 17).

There is no taking of sides or respect of persons in this wisdom, for it is without partiality, what an antidote for “party spirit”!, (v. 17).

It is simple, transparent and without hypocrisy, without double talk and without double faced-ness, (v. 17).

Adopting this heavenly wisdom in our assembly life demands self-control and hard work in total dependence on the Lord on the part of those who are in leadership. As peace makers they have to sow in peace and not in strife, (v.18). They have to show to the rest of the flock how this course is more pleasing and glorifying to God. This in itself does not exclude anyone else in fellowship from the same responsibility of shunning strife and envy and of endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, (Eph. 4:3). It is incumbent on every child of God to follow the same course. And certainly the blessed results will be

the sweet fruit of righteousness that brings glory to our God, (v. 18).

4. *“Furthermore, we had fathers of our flesh who corrected us, and we had them in reverence. Shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure, but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yeildeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them who are exercised by it” (Heb. 12: 9-11).*

The subject of this reference has to do with chastening we receive from our heavenly Father. He is said to chasten whom He loves and scourges every son He receives, (Heb. 12:6). It is His prerogative to discipline and chasten, yet we should consider it our privilege to be subjects of such dealings from Him.

This chapter in Hebrews describes three possible reactions of the children of God to their Father’s chastening. We are warned in verse five not to despise it. To despise it here means to make light of it or to try to ignore its significance. If we were to do so we will miss out on understanding the gravity of the situation that brought it about.

Then we are told in the same verse that we should not faint under pressure of His rebuke. Fainting will cause us to fall into the sin of self-pity. We will be asking the familiar question “why me?”. Just like Elijah who went away for his life and then desired to die. This reaction will cause us to be more occupied with self than with the lesson we ought to have learned.

The third and preferred reaction is to be exercised by chastening; ask-

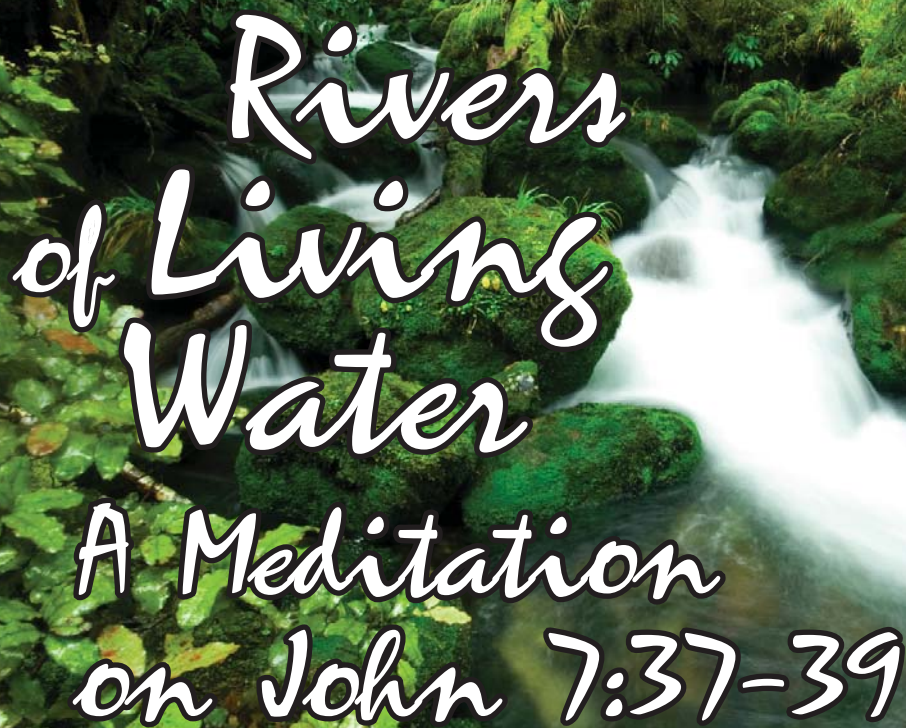
ing the Lord Himself to give us an understanding of why we are facing His loving scourge at the moment. And pleading that He will kindly teach us the lesson why He has sent this into our lives. He is interested in making us grow to be more like Christ. Therefore He would like to see us partakers of a greater measure of His holiness through His loving correction, (v. 10).

However, not every difficulty or trial we pass through is a chastening from God, for we are sometimes the authors of our own troubles. We need to be always watching how we conduct our lives and walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, (Eph. 5: 15).

The Scripture argues that our earthly fathers, to whom we gave reverence, have corrected us for the few days of our Childhood, and that it was according to their own wisdom and knowledge. Should we not then rather subject ourselves to the all-knowing and only wise God; our heavenly Father and live? And though it is often grievous and not joyous to be in the midst of the trial of chastening, yet by trusting in the wisdom of our Father, it ultimately yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness. However note that the condition for blessing is only when the child of God has been exercised by it.

In summary: caring for needy saints, love guarded by knowledge, sowing in peace in the Assembly and being gratefully exercised by chastening are the means of producing the sweet fruit of righteousness in our lives

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Rivers of Living Water

A Meditation on John 7:37-39

“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified)” (John 7:37-39).

1. The Saviour’s Cry

During the days of our Lord’s earthly life, the Festival of Tabernacles as celebrated by the Jews included certain rituals which are not prescribed in the Old Testament. One of these was the carrying of water from the Pool of Siloam each day of the festival so that it could be poured into a silver basin by the altar of burnt offering. The water was intended to remind the Jews of the fact that the Lord had given them water from the

rock in the wilderness, and also of the promised miraculous river of living water flowing from the future Millennial Temple during the kingdom of Christ. On the eighth and last day of the Festival, however, this was not done. It is therefore highly significant that Jesus chose this day to

yet another claim to, and evidence of, His Unique Deity. The key to spiritual satisfaction is implicit trust in, and commitment to, the Person of Christ to the exclusion of all other sources of satisfaction. Have we really found in Christ the only and true answer to the spiritual thirst and deepest

“He was claiming to be able to satisfy the spiritual thirst of all who came to Him in faith, recognising their need of spiritual life and satisfaction.”

stand up authoritatively and loudly cry out with His invitation of verse 37; *“If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.”* He was claiming to be able to satisfy the spiritual thirst of all who came to Him in faith, recognising their need of spiritual life and satisfaction. It was in effect

longings of our hearts? He claims to be able to meet our need, and invites us all to come to Him to receive the blessing He offers.

2. The Scripture Fulfilled

When the Saviour promised that out of a believer’s belly would flow

“Every truly repentant believer can be a “channel of blessing” to all around him. This is the Saviour’s promise to us.”

“rivers of living water,” He added, *“As the Scripture hath said”*. Probably, He meant that this phenomenon would fulfil the general thought of Old Testament Scripture concerning the blessing that could flow from a true believer to others around him, or her; for no single Scripture actually states this truth in so many words. Instead, there are a number of Scriptures which convey this wonderful thought in a variety of contexts. One of the clearest of these is found in Isaiah 58:11: *“And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: And thou shalt be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters fail not”*. In its context, the promise is to repentant Israel; but there is a clear application in spiritual principle to us as the Lord’s people today. Not only will the Lord give us spiritual satisfaction for our own blessing and enjoyment, but He will also make us a continual means of blessing to other needy souls around us. Every truly repentant believer can be a “channel of blessing” to all around him. This is the Saviour’s promise to us.

3. The Source of the Blessing

Verse 39 proceeds to explain the source of this blessing to be the Holy

Spirit Himself, who was about to be given to every believer in Christ at Pentecost, after the Lord Jesus had been glorified, and according to His own promise to His disciples. This means that in the current Christian era, when the Church of Christ is present on earth, there is a much greater opportunity for believers to be channels of blessing to others than there was in Old Testament times, because throughout this age of grace the Holy Spirit indwells the whole being of all true believers. None are exempt; in fact, Romans 8:9 states categorically that, *“if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His”*. Our potential for becoming a blessing to others is thus much greater than was the case with Old Testament saints, upon some of

“Our potential for becoming a blessing to others is much greater than with Old Testament saints.”

whom the Spirit of God came for a time, but not always permanently. And none of them were indwelt by Him. Now God Himself lives in and through us as believers. We therefore have no excuse for failing to fulfil this promise of our Lord, that we shall be the channels through whom the rivers of the living water of the Spirit of God can flow out to meet the needs of the spiritually thirsty world of men and women around us.

4. The Spirit Unquenched

But while it is true that we have the potential to be continual channels of blessing to others, sadly the reality with many of us can be very

far different from this. The reasons for this unhappy situation may not be very difficult to understand. For many believers today either grieve the Holy Spirit within them by failing to allow Him to have complete sway in their lives, thus sinning against Him, or else they quench the outflow of the Holy Spirit’s desires to bless others through us. Deliberate sins committed by us as believers will render us useless in the Lord’s service, because we have grieved the Holy Spirit who alone can enable us to fulfil this promise of our Lord. Also, simple failure to respond to the inner promptings of God’s indwelling Spirit will effectively frustrate the outflow of the blessing from us. We can become marred, or blocked channels, rather

than flowing rivers of spiritual water. The remedy for this condition of soul is simple: wholehearted confession and repentance of all known sins, in accordance with the injunction of 1 John 1:9-10; and renewed consecration of our whole lives to God, in the spirit of Romans 12:1-3. Only then can the Holy Spirit use us again as He is both able, and longing, to do. Our divinely-bestowed spiritual gifts will then be in unhindered exercise to fulfil the functions which they were intended to; namely, the blessing of both needy sinners, and also fellow-saints in the Body of Christ. Furthermore, if we truly desire to be channels of



“If we truly desire to be channels of blessing, we shall probably find that we need to surrender our liberty to engage in some legitimate pursuits and pastimes, because they tend to hinder our usefulness to our rightful Lord and Master.”

“All effective Christian service is primarily an overflow of our own hearts’ satisfaction with, and delight in, Christ Himself.”

blessing, we shall probably find that we need to surrender our liberty to engage in some legitimate pursuits and pastimes, because they tend to hinder our usefulness to our rightful Lord and Master. These are the weights that will impede our progress in the Christian race, quite apart from anything inherently sinful. But total surrender to Jesus Christ is the inevitable price of being a continual channel of blessing to others. Who, then, in practice is in control of your life: self, or Christ through His indwelling Spirit?

5. The Secret of Christian Service

These verses under consideration do, in fact, tell us the secret of all effective Christian service in this needy world. The essential prerequisite of such service is, first of all, an entire

yieldedness to, and compliance with, the exercises and promptings of God’s Holy Spirit within us. That may be called the more negative, and preparatory, side of the matter. But, on the more positive side, all effective Christian service is primarily an overflow of our own hearts’ satisfaction with, and delight in, Christ Himself. For He alone can satisfy all the needs of the poor sinful men and women who live all around us, and who, perhaps more than we sometimes realise, are looking to believers like us for an answer to their deepest problems and longings. If, therefore, they see that we have evidently found all the answers to our needs and desires in Christ, then some of them at least may be prepared to listen to our testimony to Him. Service so inspired will then be neither mechanical nor lifeless, the expression of dead formality; rather, it will be vibrant with spiritual life and energy flowing from the Spirit of God within us, and will undoubtedly be found to meet the real felt needs of those around us in the world, because they will have been brought into living relationship with the glorified Christ through us.

6. A Song of Consecration

May the words of the following hymn express our sincerest desire to

become powerful and effective channels of blessing to all around us:

How I praise Thee, precious Saviour,
That Thy love laid hold of me;
Thou hast saved and cleansed
and filled me,
That I might Thy channel be.

Channels only, blessed Master,
But with all Thy wondrous power
Flowing through us,
Thou canst use us
Every day and every hour.

Just a channel, full of blessing,
To the thirsty hearts around;
To tell out Thy full salvation,
All Thy loving message sound.

Emptied that Thou shouldest fill me,
A clean vessel in Thy hand;
With no power but as Thou givest
Graciously with each command.

Witnessing Thy power to save me,
Setting free from self and sin;
Thou hast bought me to possess me,
In Thy fullness, Lord, come in.

Jesus, fill now with Thy Spirit
Hearts that full surrender know;
That the streams of living water
From our inner man may flow.
-Mary E. Maxwell

Is this truly the prayer of all our hearts? God grant that it may be so!

Malcolm C. Davis

Leeds, UK

The Testimony of Milton & Marjorie Haack

Missionaries to the Philippines

(Re-focused) now residing in Minneapolis, Minnesota

Paul reminds us that God supplies all our need. We frequently receive mail from individuals or religious organizations requesting monthly “tax deductible” donations for some project, which they consider important. I promptly file those letters in our circular file, which gets emptied once a week.

“Our Father owns the cattle on a thousand hills,” and I am His child and co-heir of all He possesses. It must be embarrassing to our Heavenly Father, when His children become beggars, when they are heirs of so many riches.

Early in our Christian/missionary experience, my wife and I determined that we would tell only God about our needs, rather than send hinting letters to potential contributors. Earlier I read the autobiography of George Mueller, who was mightily used of God in supporting several

terial support. This is because, from the human perspective, few people at home have ever heard of you. One day my wife and I calculated our needs for the rest of the month, and it amounted to \$49.50. This we considered legitimate needs, such

as food, rent and tuition for our two young school age children. My wife and I prayed about this situation, and when we picked up the mail there was a letter from a couple in Canada, whom we had never met. A note in the letter, stated, “my wife and I observed that you are new on

the field, so we enclose a check for \$50.00 for you to use as the Lord directs you.” Fifty dollars? We only needed \$49.50. This is the super-abundant provision of our God.

While home on furlough, a brother told me, “I know you will have

“But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:19).

expenses on the field, so just let me know and I will send you a gift.” — We never had to let him know, and he never sent us a gift, but God took care of us. — Thank you!!

God has promised to supply all our NEED, not our wants. If He

“It must be embarrassing to our Heavenly Father, when His children become beggars, when they are heirs of so many riches.”

indulged us with all our wants, it would not be helpful to our spiritual life. Our wants would be equivalent to accumulated STUFF, which will all be left behind at death for relatives to squabble over, or in the rapture when it will be reduced to ashes. How much of it will we leave behind? All of it! There are no U-Haul trailers towed behind the hearse, or pockets for precious gems in the casket.

Compared to American standards, our Filipino friends are very poor. They teach us an important lesson; though extremely poor, they are happy in the Lord. The Biblical lesson is “*Godliness with contentment is great gain*” (1 Tim. 6:6)—(Lord, teach me this lesson!!).

Milton & Marjorie Haack
Minneapolis, Minnesota

“There are no U-Haul trailers towed behind the hearse, or pockets for precious gems in the casket.”

thousand orphans and he told God, but never told man about the needs. John G. Paton, and Hudson Taylor gave the same testimony of faith.

The first term on the field, for a missionary is considered the most challenging to faith, concerning ma-

O Thou of Little Faith

O thou of little faith,
God hath not failed thee yet!
When all looks dark and gloomy,
Thou dost so soon forget-

Forget that He has led thee,
And gently cleared thy way;
On clouds has poured His sunshine,
And turned thy night to day.

And if He's helped thee hitherto,
He will not fail thee now;
How it must wound His loving heart
To see thy anxious brow!

Oh! Doubt not any longer,
To Him commit thy way,
Whom in the past thou trusted,
And is "just the same today."

—Author Unknown