

**Miracles that follow the plow :: I Am Not Saved****I Am Not Saved, on: 2008/3/20 3:26**

Please pray

Re: I Am Not Saved - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2008/3/20 4:46

Praying brother, I dont know if you are or not saved, one thing i do know. God is able to save anyone who comes to him in repentance.

He is able to save to the uttermost.

Re:, on: 2008/3/20 9:25

Praying for you, brother.

"But **Christ** being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

14 **How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"**

Hebrews 9:11-13

Look to JESUS!

Re: - posted by Miccah (), on: 2008/3/20 10:47

Praying brother.

Re: I Am Not Saved, on: 2008/3/20 11:51

Richard, perhaps it would be of your best interest to share with us exactly what is the trouble. I remember saying those words AFTER I gave my heart to the LORD because I lived under a cloud of condemnation and did not understand the fullness of the salvation message.

Perhaps you are in the same situation. Where you've fallen into some ugly sin that you feel terrible for committing, and the weight of condemnation is so much that you feel unsaved.

If that is the case, oh do I know what you mean by that, and many can share in the same experience. You're in good hands here, because we have many stories to tell.

But look up my friend and simply ask the LORD Jesus to forgive you of your sins and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness.

God is your Father and He is not some ogre waiting behind a door ready to club you for doing wrong. Actually it's quite the opposite, Christ Jesus took all the clubbing on the cross for us in our stead that we might have a wonderful relationship with our heavenly Father.

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God Bless, we love you with an everlasting love. ;-)

Re:, on: 2008/3/20 12:54

Quote:

-----Richard, perhaps it would be of your best interest to share with us exactly what is the trouble.

I believe in God, but I do not know if I believe in God. I believe Christ died for my sins, but I do not know if I believe that Christ died for my sins. I believe that I have accepted His work on the cross so that I might be free from punishment, yet I do not know if I believe that I have accepted His work on the cross so that I might be free.

There are truly evil thoughts in my heart. I have never had peace about anything. I feel dead and cold. I have so many questions to ask of myself, that I cannot answer because I do not know. How will I ever know? Do I believe in God? Do I even love Him? Have I been forgiven? Will I ever love God? Will I ever understand?

I believe in God's sovereignty - if He does not accept someone as a son then He does not accept someone as a son. There is no discussion.

I will not rely on feelings and emotions to know if God has accepted me, if Christ is my Saviour, and yet I cannot weight myself up against His Word because I do not know the answers to the questions that it asks of me.

Just a drop in the ocean.

Re:, on: 2008/3/20 13:07

Richard,

have you seen a doctor about your depression? if not, do so. many people suffer depression without knowing it and there is help available.

bub

Re: - posted by Here4Him (), on: 2008/3/20 13:32

Dear Richard, take Ronyia's advice and

Quote:

-----Look to JESUS!

We can get too caught up in analysing ourselves and being all introspective, i myself have got into much despair because of this, but it is not fruitful. We need to take a look at ourselves in self examination occasionally but we need to spend much more time looking at Jesus. As you focus on the cross of Jesus Christ and the wonderful finished work He accomplished for sinners there, faith will be quickened in your heart. Faith or assurance will not come if you keep focusing on yourself. Look to Jesus Richard- see Him as the righteousness of repentant and trusting sinners. Fall into His kind and gracious arms. Jesus doesn't turn away genuine repentant seekers. Your very desire to be a Christian and to know that you know Jesus must have been quickened in you through Jesus Christ.

Can i encourage you with the words to a wonderful and favourite hymn of mine:

Come, ye sinners, poor and needy,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore;
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, love and power.

Refrain

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I will arise and go to Jesus,
He will embrace me in His arms;
In the arms of my dear Savior,
O there are ten thousand charms.

Come, ye thirsty, come, and welcome,
God's free bounty glorify;
True belief and true repentance,
Every grace that brings you nigh.

Refrain

Come, ye weary, heavy laden,
Lost and ruined by the fall;
If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all.

Refrain

View Him prostrate in the garden;
On the ground your Maker lies.
On the bloody tree behold Him;
Sinner, will this not suffice?

Refrain

Lo! th'incarnate God ascended,
Pleads the merit of His blood:
Venture on Him, venture wholly,
Let no other trust intrude.

Refrain

Let not conscience make you linger,
Not of fitness fondly dream;
All the fitness He requireth
Is to feel your need of Him.

Refrain

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2008/3/20 14:01

Quote:

bubbaguy wrote:
Richard,

have you seen a doctor about your depression? if not, do so. many people suffer depression without knowing it and there is help available.

bub

AND THE HELP COMES FROM JESUS!

Re:, on: 2008/3/20 14:06

yes, indeed Help does come from Jesus. but if a person is depressed, he may not be able to respond. personally, i have dealt with depression since about 10 yrs old. i take St John's wart everyday and, low and behold, it works. it's a gift from God!!

if i don't take it, my attitude goes through the floor, and i have no desire for worshipping, or praising God because the world seems soooooo hopeless. so i have some understanding of what Richard is going through. Been there, done that.

bub

Re:, on: 2008/3/20 14:52

Whatever you do, DON'T go to a doctor. That's the worst advice I've ever heard. Bubbyguy, the fruit of the Holy Spirit is peace and joy, and when somebody gets saved, they receive God's peace and joy, and peace and joy are the opposite of depression, which means it cannot stay.

To the one seeking salvation, I am led to post something I read by A.W. Pink, commenting on John 3:14 I would recommend you read (and Pink, too believed in the sovereignty of God). Especially read towards the end:

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up" (John 3:14). Christ had been speaking to Nicodemus about the imperative necessity of the new birth. By nature man is dead in trespasses and sins, and in order to obtain life he must be born again. The new birth is the impartation of Divine life, eternal life, but for this to be bestowed on men, the Son of man must be lifted up. Life could come only out of death. The sacrificial work of Christ is the basis of the Spirit's operations and the ground of God's gift of eternal life. Observe that Christ here speaks of the lifting up of the Son of man, for atonement could be made only by One in the nature of him who sinned, and only a Son of Man was God's Son capable of taking upon Him the penalty resting on the sinner. No doubt there was a specific reason why Christ should here refer to His sacrificial death as a "lifting up." The Jews were looking for a Messiah who should be lifted up, but elevated in a manner altogether different from what the Lord here mentions. They expected Him to be elevated to the throne of David, but before this He must be lifted up upon the Cross of shame, enduring the judgment of God upon His people's sin.

To illustrate the character, the meaning, and the purpose of His death, the Lord here refers to the well-known incident in Israel's wilderness wanderings which is recorded in Numbers 21. Israel was murmuring against the Lord, and He sent fiery serpents among the people, which bit them so that some of the people died and many others were sorely wounded from their poisonous bites. In consequence, they confessed they had sinned, and cried unto Moses for relief. He, in turn, cried unto God, and the Lord bade him make a serpent of brass, fix it on a pole, and tell the bitten Israelites to look to it in faith and they should be healed. All of this was a striking foreshadowing of Christ being lifted up on the Cross in order that He might save, through the look of faith, those who were dying from sin. The type is a remarkable one and worthy of our closest study.

A "serpent" was a most appropriate figure of that deadly and destructive power, the origin of which the Scriptures teach us to trace to the Serpent, whose "seed" sinners are declared to be. The poison of the serpent's bite, which vitiates the entire system of its victim, and from the fatal effects of which there was no deliverance, save that which God provided, strikingly exhibited the awful nature and consequences of sin. The remedy which God provided was the exhibition of the destroyer destroyed. Why was not one of the actual serpents spiked by Moses to the pole? Ah, that would have marred the type: that would have pictured judgment executed on the sinner himself; and, worse still, would have misrepresented our sinless Substitute. In the type chosen there was the likeness of a serpent, not an actual serpent, but a piece of brass made like one. So, the One who is the sinners Savior was sent "in the likeness of sin's flesh" (Rom. 8:3, Gk.), and God "made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21).

But how could a serpent fitly typify the Holy One of God? This is the very last thing of all we had supposed could, with any propriety, be a figure of Him. True, the "serpent" did not, could not, typify Him in His essential character, and perfect life. The brazen serpent only foreshadowed Christ as He was "lifted up." The lifting up manifestly pointed to the Cross. What was the "serpent?" It was the reminder and emblem of the curse. It was through the agency of that old Serpent, the Devil, that our first parents were seduced, and brought under the curse of a Holy God. And on the cross, dear reader, the holy One of God, incarnate, was made a curse for us. We would not dare make such an assertion, did not Scripture itself expressly affirm it. In Galatians 3:13 we are told, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a cur

se for us." There was no flaw, then, in the type. The foreshadowing was perfect. A "serpent" was the only thing in all nature which could accurately prefigure the crucified Savior made a curse for us.

But why a "serpent" of brass? That only brings out once more the perfect accuracy of the type. "Brass" speaks of two things. In the symbolism of Scripture brass is the emblem of Divine judgment. The brazen altar illustrates this truth, for on it the sacrificial animals were slain, and upon it descended the consuming fire from heaven. Again; in Deuteronomy 28, the Lord declared unto Israel, that if they would not hearken unto His voice and do His commandments (verse 15), that His curse should come upon them (verse 16), and as a part of the Divine judgment with which they should be visited, He warned them, "Thy heaven that is above thy head shall be brass" (verse 23). Once more, in Revelation 1, where Christ is seen as Judge, inspecting the seven churches we are told, "His feet were like fine brass" (verse 15). The "serpent," then, spoke of the curse which sin entailed; the "brass" told of God's judgment falling on the One made sin for us. But there is another thought suggested by the brass. Brass is harder than iron, or silver or gold. It told, then, of Christ's mighty strength, which was able to endure the awful judgment which fell upon Him—a mere creature, though sinless, would have been utterly consumed.

From what has been said, it will be evident that when God told Moses to make a serpent of brass, fix it upon a pole, and bid the bitten Israelites look on it and they should live, that He was preaching to them the Gospel of His grace. We would now point out seven things which these Israelites were not bidden to do.

1. They were not told to manufacture some ointment as the means of healing their wounds. Doubtless, that would have seemed much more reasonable to them. But it would have destroyed the type. The religious doctors of the day are busy inventing spiritual lotions, but they effect no cures. Those who seek spiritual relief by such means are like the poor woman mentioned in the Gospel: she "suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse" (Mark 5:26).

2. They were not told to minister to others who were wounded, in order to get relief for themselves. This, too, would have appealed to their sentiments as being more practical and more desirable than gazing at a pole, yet in fact it had been most impracticable. Of what use would it be for one to jump into deep water to rescue a drowning man if he could not swim a stroke himself! How then can one who is dying and unable to deliver himself, help others in a similar state. And yet there are many today engaged in works of charity with the vain expectation that giving relief to others will counteract the deadly virus of sin which is at work in their own souls.

3. They were not told to fight the serpents. If some of our moderns had been present that day they would have urged Moses to organize a Society for the Extermination of Serpents! But of what use had that been to those who were already bitten and dying? Had each stricken one killed a thousand serpents they would still have died. And what does all this fighting sin amount to! True, it affords an outlet for the energy of the flesh; but all these crusades against intemperance, profanity and vice, have not improved society any, nor have they brought a single sinner one step nearer to Christ.

4. They were not told to make an offering to the serpent on the pole. God did not ask any payment from them in return for their healing. No, indeed. Grace ceases to be grace if any price is paid for what it brings. But how frequently is the Gospel perverted at this very point! Not long ago the writer preached on human depravity, addressing himself exclusively to the unsaved. He sought by God's help to show the unbeliever the terribleness of his state and how desperate was his need of a Savior to deliver him from the wrath to come. As we took our seat, the pastor of the church rose and announced an irrelevant hymn and then urged everybody present to "re-consecrate themselves to God." Poor man! That was the best he knew. But what pitiful blindness! Other preachers are asking their hearers to "Give their hearts to Jesus"—another miserable perversion. God does not ask the sinner to give anything, but to Receive His Christ.

5. They were not told to pray to the serpent. Many evangelists urge their hearers to go to the mourners bench or penitents form and there plead with God for pardoning mercy, and if they are dead in earnest they are led to believe that God has heard them for their much speaking. If these "seekers after a better life" believe what the preacher has told them, namely, that they have "prayed through" and have now "got forgiveness," they feel happy, and for a while continue treading the clean side of the Broad Road with a light heart; but the almost invariable consequence is that their last state is worse than the first. O dear reader, do not make the fatal mistake of substituting prayer for faith in Christ.

6. They were told not to look at Moses. They had been looking to Moses, and urging him to cry to God on their behalf; and when God responded, He took their eyes from off Moses, and commanded them to look at the brazen serpent. Moses was the Law-giver, and how many today are looking to him for salvation. They are trusting in their own imperfect obedience to God's commandments to take them to heaven. In other words, they are depending on their own works. But Scri

ipture says emphatically, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us" (Titus 3:5). The Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and Christ alone can save.

7. They were not told to look at their wounds. Some think they need to be more occupied with the work of examining their own wicked hearts in order to promote that degree of repentance which they deem a necessary qualification for salvation. But as well attempt to produce heat by looking, at the snow, or light by peering into the darkness, as seek salvation by looking to self for it. To be occupied with myself is only to be taken up with that which God has condemned, and which already has the sentence of death written upon it. But, it may be asked, "Ought I not to have that godly sorrow which worketh repentance before I trust in Christ?" Certainly not. You cannot have a godly sorrow till you are a godly person, and you cannot be a godly person until you have submitted yourself to God and obeyed Him by believing in Christ. Faith is the beginning of all godliness.

We have developed the seven points above with the purpose of exposing some of the wiles by which the Enemy is deceiving a multitude of souls. It is greatly to be feared that there are many in our churches today who sincerely think they are Christians, but who are sincerely mistaken. Believing that I am a millionaire will not make me one; and believing that I am saved, when I am not, will not save me. The Devil is well pleased if he can get the awakened sinner to look at anything rather than Christ—good works, repentance, feelings, resolutions, baptism, anything so long as it is not Christ Himself.

Turning now from the negative to the positive side, let us consider, though it must be briefly, one or two points in the type itself. First, Moses was commanded by God to make a serpent of brass—it was of the Lord's providing—and the spiritual significance of this we have already looked at. Second, Moses was commanded to fix this brazen serpent upon a pole. Thus was the Divine remedy publicly exhibited so that all Israel might look on it and be healed. Third, the Lord's promise was that "it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live" (Num. 21:8). Thus, not only did God here give a foreshadowing of the means by which salvation was to be brought out for sinners, but also the manner in which the sinner obtains an interest in that salvation, namely, by looking away from himself to the Divinely appointed object of faith, even to the Lord Jesus Christ. How blessed this was: the brazen serpent was "lifted up" so that those who were too weak to crawl up to the pole itself, and perhaps too far gone to even raise their voices in supplication could, nevertheless, lift up their eyes in simple faith in God's promise and be healed.

Just as the bitten Israelites were healed by a look of faith, so the sinner may be saved by looking to Christ by faith. Saving faith is not some difficult and meritorious work which man must perform so as to give him a claim upon God for the blessing of salvation. It is not on account of our faith that God saves us, but it is through the means of our faith. It is in believing we are saved. It is like saying to a starving man, He that eats of this food shall be relieved from the pangs of hunger, and be refreshed and strengthened. Eating is no meritorious performance, but, from the nature of things, eating is the indispensable means of relieving hunger. To say that when a man believes he shall be saved, is just to say that the guiltiest of the guilty, and the vilest of the vile, is welcome to salvation, if he will but receive it in the only way in which, from the nature of the case, it can be received, namely, by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, which means believing what God has recorded concerning His Son in the Holy Scriptures. The moment a sinner does that he is saved, just as God said to Moses, "It shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live."

"Every one that is bitten." No matter how many times he may have been bitten; no matter how far the poison had advanced in its progress toward a fatal issue, if he but looked he should "live." Such is the Gospel declaration: "whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." There is no exception. The vilest wretch on the face of the earth, the most degraded and despised, the most miserable and wretched of all human kind, who believes in Christ shall be saved by Him with an everlasting salvation. Not sin but unbelief can bar the sinner's way to the Savior. It is possible that some of the Israelites who heard of the Divinely appointed remedy made light of it; it may be that some of them cherished wicked doubts as to the possibility of them obtaining any relief by looking at a brazen serpent; some may have hoped for recovery by the use of ordinary means; no matter, if these things were true of them, and later they found the disease gaining on them, and then they lifted up a believing eye to the Divinely erected standard, they too were healed. And should these lines be read by one who has long procrastinated, who has continued for many long years in a course of stout-hearted unbelief and impenitence, nevertheless, the marvelous grace of our God declares to you, that "whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." It is still the "accepted time"; it is still "the day of salvation." Believe now, and thou shalt be saved.

Man became a lost sinner by a look, for the first thing recorded of Eve in connection with the fall of our first parents is that "The woman saw that the tree was good for food" (Gen. 3:6) In like manner, the lost sinner is saved by a look. The Christian life begins by looking: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none el

se" (Isa. 45:22). The Christian life continues by looking: "let us run with patience the race which is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of faith" (Heb. 12:2). And at the end of the Christian life we "re still to be looking for Christ: "For our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:20). From first to last, the one thing required is looking at God's Son.

But perhaps right here the troubled and trembling sinner will voice his last difficulty—"Sir, I do not know that I am looking in the correct way." Dear friend, God does not ask you to look at your look, but at Christ. In that great crowd of bitten Israelites of old there were some with young eyes and some with old eyes that looked at the serpent; there were some with clear vision and some with dim vision; there were some who had a full view of the serpent by reason of their nearness to the uplifted type of Christ; and there were, most probably, others who could scarcely see it because of their great distance from the pole, but the Divine record is "It shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live." And so it is today. The Lord Jesus says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He does not define the method or the manner of coming, and even if the poor sinner comes groping, stumbling, falling, yet if only he will "come" there is a warm welcome for him. So it is in our text: it is "whosoever believeth"—nothing is said about the strength or the intelligence of the belief, for it is not the character or degree of faith that saves, but Christ Himself. Faith is simply the eye of the soul that looks off unto the Lord Jesus, Do not rest, then, on your faith, but on the Savior Himself.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Christ had just made mention of His death, and had affirmed that the Cross was an imperative necessity; it was not "the Son of man shall be lifted up," but "the Son of man must be lifted up." There was no other alternative. If the claims of God's throne were to be met, if the demands of justice were to be satisfied, if the sin was to be put away, it could only be by some sinless One being punished in the stead of those who should be saved. The righteousness of God required this: the Son of man must be lifted up.

(Taken from A.W. Pink's "Exposition of the Gospel of John")

Re:, on: 2008/3/20 15:04

Richard,

Here is a short Paul Washer video that I believe is straight from heaven. Please watch it and I will pray for you too. Listen to Paul Washers advice and read what brother Josef has posted before me.

(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?vV4axy22oTkA>) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4axy22oTkA>

-Jim

Re: - posted by wallbuilder, on: 2008/3/20 15:39

Richard-

My heart goes out to you. What a spot to be in-and to feel the way you do. Just know that Jesus said that "anyone who comes to him he will never cast away". And that it's God's will that "none should perish, but that all should have everlasting life".

If you decide that you do indeed want Jesus, then simply go to him in sheer faith and take him at his word. He wants you and loves you. There is absolutely nothing you have ever done or even think that will ever separate you from the love of God in Christ. But it's your choice. You must make that decision.

As far as the contradictions you think and feel, I don't think anyone here can truly asses what's going on. My advice is to see a pastor or prayer warrior in person who will seek the Lord with you and find out just what's going on. There may be demonic strongholds that are bringing mindsets to torment you.

Call some prayer lines. There are many here in the United States. The 700 Club has trained counselors 24/7 to help people. See someone in person, and talk to someone.

God isn't the one condemning you. He loves you.

I hope that helps some.

Praying for you

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2008/3/20 16:20

I ran across a testimony that you might like to read. If you don't know the source, I can direct you to it.

I have one of those weird testimonies, in the sense that I can't pinpoint when I gave my life to Christ. (It might be quite long. Sorry!)

I've been brought up in a Christian family and going to church every week, all seventeen years of my life. I think I sort of made a commitment when I was six or seven, although I can't really remember and didn't really understand what I was doing. If I had become a Christian then, it didn't really change my life because I just carried on living the same way. I guess this might sort of answer my own question, because if God comes into your life then it will definitely change you.

I think it is Paul Washer that talks about how a man would be changed if a ten ton lorry drove into him. So if Jesus Christ comes into your life, He will do a lot more changing than a ten ton truck would ever do.

I suppose the next thing that sticks out is when I went to a youth weekend type thing at my church in July last year. It was after the Saturday evening talk and I think we had just sung 'In Christ Alone' to finish. I didn't feel right to leave the hall and go back with the others because I felt so challenged. However, I couldn't really explain why. So I just sat there and a couple of older friends asked if I wanted to pray with them.

So we went over to the park opposite our church and the two guys prayed. Then I started to pray, and all I really remember was being brought to tears by the presence of God, and the conviction that I wasn't living like a Christian should. I suppose this could be defined as 'the moment' when I became a Christian and Christ entered my life.

From that moment about a year ago, my life has definitely changed, most notably the way I behave. I can vividly remember what an idiot I was before at primary school. But God changed me, and although I'm not perfect (yet!) I have improved. I enjoy reading God's Word, I enjoy prayer and listening to sermons, also meeting with my brothers and sisters at my church.

I did go through a patch not many months ago when I was continually doubting my salvation. I really did lose heart, but hallelujah the Lord has brought me through it. I remember worrying about all the sins that I commit every day, thinking to myself, 'If I was a Christian, then why am I still doing these things?' But the Lord really did speak to me, and I remember Him telling me, 'It isn't about what you've done.' If salvation was based on our works and what we have done, then we would all be destined for hell and eternal punishment. But praise God for His grace and the fact that JESUS CHRIST died for us, so we might be forgiven. Hallelujah, what a Saviour!

And here I am today, a seventeen year old listening to sermons, praying and spending more time with God every day. And don't think that I'm praising myself and showing off here, I give all glory to God because He has helped me get here! It isn't about what I've done or am doing, but what Christ has done and God is doing! It is nothing of my own work.

Praise God because He is good, gracious, merciful, loving and He is our hope. Cling onto Him, cry out to Him and realise that we can do all things because God will give us the ability to do it.

There in the ground His body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain.
Then bursting forth in glorious Day,
Up from the grave He rose again.
And as He stands in victory,
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me;
For I am His and He is mine,
Brought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death-

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This is the power of Christ in me.
From life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny.
No power of hell, no scheme of man,
Can ever pluck me from His hand.
'Till He returns or calls me home,
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand.

Hallelujah! All glory and praise to God.

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2008/3/20 16:27

Here is another one that may encourage you.

i have many , but the most recent one has been after a period of some darkness in my life, ive have been finding very hard to pray, felt heavy in the spirit and struggled to get myself into a state just to pray, i felt like satan was coming in like a flood, wave after wave came into my life, my own struggle my wife and i meet some difficulties, the children and our entire family was shaken the last couple of weeks, these have been dark weeks i must say, ive read psalm 13 everyday especially the last verses and meditating on that praising God even when things look as darkest and trust him,

and two nights ago i was totally broken i wept and cried to God i cant take this anymore, split the skyes open and come again or take me home, and now two days later i know God heard me... EVERY SINGLE "problem" is gone/resolved, and as i was sitting on the buss this morning i felt some refreshing of my soul, and i feel God raised me up once again, and im just so grateful that the deeper of pit ive gotten myself into the brighter his wonderful light shines thru, as that puritan prayer.... the deeper the well the brighter the stars shine,

Thank you God for being such a Good GOD! Glory to Jesus Christ!!

What can I say? Amen and hallelujah.

Re: - posted by BrianPaul (), on: 2008/3/20 16:41

Hopefully this passage is suitable:

1 John 3:16-24

16This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. 17If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? 18Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. 19This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence 20whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

21Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God 22and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him. 23And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. 24Those who obey his commands live in him, and he lives in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

Miracles that follow the plow :: I Am Not Saved

Re:, on: 2008/3/20 16:49

Richard, OK, don't go to see a doctor in Mexico. (if its the worst advice he has ever heard, they must have very bad doctors there.)

Jesus CAN and will heal your soul. But YOU have to take care of your physical wellbeing. and depression, which i believe you are clearly experiencing, is primarily a physical, not spiritual, disease. when you are free of it, the world will seem a much more livable place and the presence of a Loving God in your life much more a reality.

If you were fat, would they tell you, oh go ahead, eat alllll you want? Just pray to Jesus and He will take your big belly a way.

Well, there really is no difference between being depressed and being fat. both are physical conditions that can ruin your life, no matter how much you pray. this is because God gave us abilities and brains. either exercise them or lose them, and what the other posters advising you against doctors are REALLY saying is you can ignore the gifts that God has given you and everything will be OK as long as you pray.

they don't have to live with depression. you do.

bub

Re:, on: 2008/3/20 17:17

Quote:

richardf wrote:

Quote:
-----Richard, perhaps it would be of your best interest to share with us exactly what is the trouble.

I believe in God, but I do not know if I believe in God. I believe Christ died for my sins, but I do not know if I believe that Christ died for my sins. I believe that I have accepted His work on the cross so that I might be free from punishment, yet I do not know if I believe that I have accepted His work on the cross so that I might be free.

There are truly evil thoughts in my heart. I have never had peace about anything. I feel dead and cold. I have so many questions to ask of myself, that I cannot answer because I do not know. How will I ever know? Do I believe in God? Do I even love Him? Have I been forgiven? Will I ever love God? Will I ever understand?

I believe in God's sovereignty - if He does not accept someone as a son then He does not accept someone as a son. There is no discussion.

I will not rely on feelings and emotions to know if God has accepted me, if Christ is my Saviour, and yet I cannot weight myself up against His Word because I do not know the answers to the questions that it asks of me.

Just a drop in the ocean.

Throw all your doubts away. The enemy will give you all kinds of doubts. God is not the author of confusion but of peace. We must come to God by faith and just believe that if you have asked for forgiveness He has forgiven you. All God sees when He sees you is the blood of Jesus. The first step is just in trusting Him and I am confident He will reveal Himself more and more to you in His time. He will never forsake you.

The reason I tell you to throw all your doubts away is because unbelief is from the enemy. Resist the devil and he will flee from you draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you. That's a promise.

James 4:6-8
6But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

Miracles that follow the plow :: I Am Not Saved

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

Re:, on: 2008/3/20 17:21

Quote:
-----There are truly evil thoughts in my heart. I have never had peace about anything. I feel dead and cold. I have so many questions to ask of myself, that I cannot answer because I do not know. How will I ever know? Do I believe in God? Do I even love Him? Have I been forgiven? Will I ever love God? Will I ever understand?

I truly hear your heart Brother. And I do understand, I've been where you are so many times.

The fact of the matter is your going to have to somehow resist the thought of not believing in God. Look at those negative thoughts as the enemy coming against your soul. We are engaged in a warfare and I am sure you know this. However, you are weak right now and the devil knows this, so he is taking advantage of your weakness. But remember too, when we are weak then am I strong. Even though Satan goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, God too seeks for someone that He may be strong on behalf of their weakness. So you are in good company since the LORD is on your side, and since He is, who can be against you? Not even your heart that is condemning you, because God is greater than your heart.

So be of good courage our big brother Jesus has overcome the world the flesh and the devil and he calls you and I more than a conquerer.

Richard it takes faith to believe these things and I know I was where you are at. You do have faith to believe because you took the time to post your initial posting saying, "Please Pray". That speaks volumes to me. It's saying that you do believe that God does answer prayer and this is your way of crying out. Bless God. As a body that's what were here for, and you can be sure that people are praying for you that your faith fail not.

Quote:
----- How will I ever know? Do I believe in God? Do I even love Him? Have I been forgiven? Will I ever love God? Will I ever understand?

I can say yes to all these questions but only you can truly answer them. God's word is on trial and the devil has you in court and he is trying you for doubt and unbelief. The only way you can win this case is to stand up against the prosecutor, because the Judge is not condemning you. Your pleading guilty when it's not necessary brother. Jesus took your place, He stood in the place that your standing and took your punishment. There is no need for you to be where you are at.

You're not just a drop from the Ocean, you've been caught from the Sea. I used to think that way too, but it's a waste of time thinking that way. Believe the gospel and trust in Jesus and you can't go wrong. Yes there will be times of uncertainty and doubt, but they are fleeting moments in time because of the circumstances that surround us.

The promises of God are yea and amen to them that believe.

Saint let's pray that Richard be given the courage to believe the gospel, that his faith be renewed. I do not believe that he is being double minded, but that he is discouraged about some things.

P.S. Avoid the advice of going to see a doctor for depression. A Pastor told me that once when I told him my problems, but I shrugged his suggestion off, I went to Doctor Jesus and He has been my constant friend and help in my time of need. God Bless.

Re: I Am Not Saved, on: 2008/3/20 18:22

Richard said

Quote:

-----Richard, perhaps it would be of your best interest to share with us exactly what is the trouble.

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I will not rely on feelings and emotions to know if God has accepted me, if Christ is my Saviour, and yet I cannot weight myself up against His Word because I do not know the answers to the questions that it asks of me.

Just a drop in the ocean.

Dear Richard,

The way you have set out these opposing statements, makes me think feel you are being opposed (as wallbuilder suggested) by the thoughts of our adversary, the devil. That simple.

I have a question, which you don't need to answer publicly, but I will post, with the spiritual solution, here. The question is: have you ever consciously toyed with the idea that God does not exist? (Alternative ways to consider this question might be: were you taught evolution at school? Do you watch\have you watched movies with inappropriate content? (These could be anything from sci-fi\alien content to explicit immorality.) Perhaps you did not initiate such thoughts\behavior, but an older person with some authority over you (eg teacher, parent, brother\sister, babysitter, friend's family) brought these things to you while you were too young to make an informed consent, or, reject them in a mature way. In other words, you were vulnerable due to your youth, and didn't know you were being misled\misdirected. Or, it was all your own bright idea to toy in your mind with whether He exists or not. You may have done this so as to try to enjoy sin a little longer.

Let me show you something, which I first noticed in the Old Testament, namely, that praise and worship of God were not necessarily related to *feeling* like it. Simply, God would say 'praise Me', and He expected them to do it in simple obedience - and that pleased Him.

Now, bring this thought to the New Testament, and read from Romans 1:

20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, **being understood by the things that are made**, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

(There really is no way round the honesty with which God expects us to deal with Him. He is Truth, remember. To gain

the knowledge of Him, you have to let go of the knowledge of godless living which you already have. If you've done your best with repentance, then you simply must start believing that He is going to keep His word.)

Here's a remedy. (I'm going to assume what I'm sharing is relevant, even if it's not the whole answer. This is part of my testimony, so I know it works.)

Hebrews 12

1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Within the Hebrew letter, 'the sin which doth so easily beset us' is unbelief. (Think about this. We've just had in chapter 11, a list of people who obtained salvation through faith *without* having been baptized in the Spirit\born again.) Thus, if these thoughts are relevant to you at all, you should consider *repenting from unbelief* no matter how dead and cold you feel.

Those feelings (dead and cold) are appropriate for a Christian whose heart is really still enthralled with sin. God makes us so we really do *understand* we are sinning our way to eternal death (unnecessarily).

The next problem is that you don't have any sense of *knowing* that you believe what you're supposed to believe, and you're not necessarily sure *you* believe. Here is where Jesus comes to the rescue. You can ask Him to give you 'faith' - like... a dollop of faith; that is, **His faith**, knowing that His faith believes perfectly.

You can adopt His faith as your faith for everything you need it to bring you, including your salvation (which of course it did), meaning not only your Salvation, but the outworking of 'salvation' it day by day.

You have to receive this as a key - like the unlocking of a door which otherwise doesn't yield no matter how much you push it in your own strength, (or maze, in which you are lost), and then you have to keep holding on to His faithfulness, until you finally begin to be sure of your ground in Him for yourself.

If you want to know how long I leant on this method for my deliverance and salvation, I'll try to work it out for you, but... it wasn't anything short like a year or two, it ran beyond two decades, I believe.

Mark 11:22

And Jesus answering saith unto them, 'Have faith in God'.

For 'have faith in God' read 'hold the faithfulness of God'.

Now... think about what it means to hold something. You have to keep gripping it, or you can't be described as 'holding' it, because it will fall to the ground.

At the same time, though, you need to know these verses also, in which God is holding **you**, and will not let you\anyone who believes *fall to the ground*.

Deuteronomy 33:27

The eternal God *is thy* refuge, and underneath the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, 'Destroy' *them*.

Remember, this is what happens when we begin to believe God enough to embrace the cross (death\Jordan), and drive out the enemies from the terrain of our life. He goes before for us (as He went before us into death), and all we have to do is possess the land of promise.

Isaiah 49:16

Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of *my* hands;
thy walls *are* continually before me.

I know this was a lot of writing, but the concepts are simple.

God bless you as you keep grappling for that prized touch from Himself.

EDIT: I should have said something more.... Please pray simply, that the Lord will come and heal your mind, so you are able to see what He wants you to see, and hear His word to you, and give you peace in your head as well as your heart.

Re: I Am Not Saved - posted by ccchhrrriiiss (), on: 2008/3/20 18:57

Hi richardf...

I can't pretend to know all that you are going through. However, I can remind you that the Lord only thinks good thoughts about you. Even if you are living in constant sin, the Lord does not wish for you to perish. Simply call upon His Name, and realize that He hears you.

I am praying for you.

:-)

1 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

4 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

13 Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

15 O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

Psalm 51:1-17

Re., on: 2008/3/20 19:13

"I remember one day in Shanghai I was talking with a brother who was very exercised concerning his spiritual state. He said, 'So many are living beautiful, saintly lives. I am ashamed of myself. I call myself a Christian and yet when I compare myself with others I feel I am not one at all. I want to know this crucified life, this resurrection life, but I do not know it and see no way of getting there.' Another brother was with us, and the two of us had been talking for two hours or so, trying to get the man to see that he could not have anything apart from Christ, but without success. Said our friend, 'the best thing a man can do is to pray.' 'But if God has already given you everything, what do you need to pray for?' we asked. 'He hasn't', the man replied, 'for I am still losing my temper, still failing constantly; so I must pray more.' 'Well', we said, 'do you get what you pray for?' 'I am sorry to say that I do not get anything', he replied. We tried to point out that, just as he had done nothing for his justification, so he need do nothing for his sanctification.

Just then a third brother, much used of the Lord, came in and joined us. There was a thermos flask on the table, and this brother picked it up and said, 'What is this?' 'A thermos flask.' 'Well, you just imagine for a moment that this thermos flask can pray, and that it starts praying something like this: "Lord, I want very much to be a thermos flask. Wilt Thou make me to be a thermos flask? Lord, give me grace to become a thermos flask. Do please make me one!" What will you say?' 'I do not think even a thermos flask would be so silly,' our friend replied. 'It would be nonsense to pray like that; it is a thermos flask!' Then my brother said, 'You are doing the same thing. God in times past has already included you in Christ. When He died, you died; when He lived, you lived. Now today you cannot say, "I want to die; I want to be crucified; I want to have resurrection life." The Lord simply looks at you and says, "You are dead! You have new life!" All your praying is just as absurd as that of the thermos flask. You do not need to pray to the Lord for anything; you merely need your eyes opened to see that He has done it all.'

That is the point. We need not work to die, we need not wait to die, we are dead. We only need to recognize what the Lord has already done and to praise Him for it. Light dawned for that man. With tears in his eyes he said, 'Lord, I praise Thee that Thou hast already included me in Christ. All that is His is mine!' Revelation had come and faith had something to lay hold of; and if you could have met that brother later on, what a change you would have found!..."

-Watchman Nee

Re., on: 2008/3/21 10:52

Yesterday I was thinking about grace, in particular Ephesians 2:

1 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,

2 in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.

3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,

5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—**it is by grace you have been saved.**

6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,

7 **in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.**

8 **For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.**

10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do

o.

Is it really this simple? Grace is unmeritable, not for sale, cannot be worked for. Can I really come to Jesus and accept His grace? With nothing that I can or ever will be able to do? And He will be faithful? No matter how I feel?

Re: - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2008/3/21 12:19

Quote:
-----I believe in God, but I do not know if I believe in God. I believe Christ died for my sins, but I do not know if I believe that Christ died for my sins. I believe that I have accepted His work on the cross so that I might be free from punishment, yet I do not know if I believe that I have accepted His work on the cross so that I might be free. There are truly evil thoughts in my heart. I have never had peace about anything. I feel dead and cold. I have so many questions to ask of myself, that I cannot answer because I do not know. How will I ever know? Do I believe in God? Do I even love Him? Have I been forgiven? Will I ever love God? Will I ever understand? I believe in God's sovereignty - if He does not accept someone as a son then He does not accept someone as a son. There is no discussion. I will not rely on feelings and emotions to know if God has accepted me, if Christ is my Saviour, and yet I cannot weight myself up against His Word because I do not know the answers to the questions that it asks of me. Just a drop in the ocean.

Brother, seems like an awful lot of I's in there. What about Jesus?

Don't faint before you have prevailed. Wait on God for power as you are commanded in Scripture. Leave the question of your salvation steadily in the hands of Jesus Christ.

In Christ,

Ron

Re: - posted by Here4Him (), on: 2008/3/21 12:27

Yes Richard that's it! Grace Grace Grace, all of Grace! Take God at His Word, cast yourself upon the grace of God, and fall all into the kind arms of Jesus Christ.

It's all been done brother, will not the finished work of Christ suffice?

I love this hymn, meditate on these precious gospel truths:

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure;
Save from wrath and make me pure.

Not the labor of my hands
Can fulfill Thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and Thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to the cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress;
Helpless look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Savior, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath,

Miracles that follow the plow :: I Am Not Saved

When mine eyes shall close in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown,
See Thee on Thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.

Re:, on: 2008/3/21 12:33

Quote:

richardf wrote:

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- 4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,
- 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—**it is by grace you have been saved.**
- 6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,
- 7 **in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.**
- 8 **For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—**
- 9 **not by works, so that no one can boast.**
- 10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Is it really this simple? Grace is unmeritable, not for sale, cannot be worked for. Can I really come to Jesus and accept His grace? With nothing that I can or ever will be able to do? And He will be faithful? No matter how I feel?

That's the only way you can come by faith alone.

I was just thinking today about what I quoted here yesterday:

Quote:

-----"I remember one day in Shanghai I was talking with a brother who was very exercised concerning his spiritual state. He said, 'So many are living beautiful, saintly lives. I am ashamed of myself. I call myself a Christian and yet when I compare myself with others I feel I am not one at all. I want to know this crucified life, this resurrection life, but I do not know it and see no way of getting there.' Another brother was with us, and the two of us had been talking for two hours or so, trying to get the man to see that he could not have anything apart from Christ, but without success. Said our friend, 'the best thing a man can do is to pray.' 'But if God has already given you everything, what do you need to pray for?' we asked. 'He hasn't', the man replied, 'for I am still losing my temper, still failing constantly; so I must pray more.' 'Well', we said, 'do you get what you pray for?' 'I am sorry to say that I do not get anything', he replied. We tried to point out that, just as he had done nothing for his justification, so he need do nothing for his sanctification.

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-Watchman Nee

Christians do not always have overwhelming joy and peace. Actually more like just the opposite atleast half the time.

2 Corinthians 4:7-9

7But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

8We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

9Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

So we can't go by our feelings but by faith in God alone. If you have asked for forgiveness and put your faith and trust in the finished work on calvary than you are saved. If you sin again just ask God for forgiveness, keep your eyes on Jesus and just keep walking. Praying for you.

Re: - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2008/3/21 12:42

The Secret of Victory Over Sin

THESE DAYS OF WAR remind us afresh of the man who reported to his commanding officer, "I have taken a prisoner." His commander said, "Bring him along with you." "He won't come," complained the soldier. "Well, then, come yourself," replied the officer. "I can't. He won't let me," was the final acknowledgment. I fear there is a great deal of Christian victory that is no deeper than that. All Christians have indeed been freed from the penalty of sin. But what about sin's power? Are we to camp forever around the truth of our justification, that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound"? Were we justified that we might be legally safe, or that we might become morally and spiritually sound? Were we not declared righteous in Christ that we might be holy in life?

Most of God's children seem to have assumed the position that, having been justified, it is quite optional whether or not we live unto ourselves. Our restless and uneasy consciences would often stir us up to heart conviction of our unholiness. But we have contented ourselves with our judicial standing in Christ. We have misused and abused the blessed truth that "if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Perhaps unconsciously to ourselves, we have settled down to an ordinary and defeated Christian life, a customary unholiness. When the Captain of our salvation looks to us to be more than conquerors, to triumph in every place and take captivity captive, we cannot bring our sinful lives into obedience. "Well, then, come yourself," cries our Captain. But indwelling sinful self "won't let me."

Some Christians have been affrighted by the fanatical extremes of perfectionism. Their fears are not without foundation. However, we commend to the reader the wise words of Dr. A. J. Gordon:

Divine truth as revealed in Scripture seems often to lie between two extremes. If we regard the doctrine of sinless perfection as a heresy, we regard contentment with sinful imperfection as a greater heresy. And we gravely fear that many Christians make the apostle's words, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves," the unconscious justification for a low standard of Christian living. It were almost better for one to overstate the possibilities of sanctification in his eager grasp after holiness, than to understate them in his complacent satisfaction with a traditional unholiness. Certainly it is not an edifying spectacle to see a Christian worldling throwing stones at a Christian perfectionist.

But what saith the Scripture? "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid" (Rom. 6:1, 2).

Is the reader one of those souls who has discovered that, whereas you thought you had taken a prisoner captive, you find yourself a slave, a veritable victim of self and indwelling sin? You find yourself double-minded and unstable in all your ways? You cry with Paul: "The good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." You have watched and prayed. You have struggled and fought, you have, mourned and wept over the futility of your effort to, live for Christ. You may have tried to pray all night, or to "pray through" in order to "get the blessing." How often you have been filled with disgust and shame and secret weeping over your inward wrongness! But in spite of all your agonizing and strivings, you find your resolutions only so many ropes of sand. Self can never cast out self. You are becoming weaker and weaker in your struggle against sin. Even your faith seems to be fading out. When you "would" take sin a prisoner, bring him along, lock him up, and let him have no liberty, you find that you are actually the captive. Sin and self are in virtual control of the entire sweep of your life. What inward tragedy and conflict and defeat! Oh, the folly and futility of self-effort!

But there is a redeeming feature. Faith is often born in despair. To become exceeding sinful in our own eyes may bring us to Paul's heart-rending cry: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:24.

)

God is a tower without a stair,
And His perfection loves despair.

What is the matter? Wherein is our trouble? We have proceeded on the wrong basis. We have missed God's way of victory over sin. James H. McConkey well says: "God lays His foundations deep. Victory over sin He lays in the deeps of de

ath. The Holy Spirit begins His triumphant teaching of the believer's victory over sin by one terse, striking, graphic phrase, 'dead to sin.' Notice in Romans 6 the Spirit's emphasis on this death to sin: "dead to sin" (v. 2); "died unto sin" (v. 10); "dead indeed unto sin" (v. 11).

In verse 10 we have the truth that Jesus Christ died not only for sins, but that "He died unto sin." When He was "made sin" God exacted of Him sin's penalty to the full. That penalty was death. In death, sin's penalty and power were exhausted. Sin's power, as well as sin's claims, are no more. Hence we read "death hath no more dominion over him." Christ died unto sin. He now lives forever unto God beyond the touch and reach of sin.

Paul asks: "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein? Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" (Rom. 6:1-3, R.V.) Note that Paul does not say we have actually died, neither is he saying we are literally "dead to sin." But Paul is saying that which is true of every believer, namely, that he is dead to sin through his union with Christ. Each and every believer has been baptized by the Spirit into Christ. "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit" one with the Crucified. When Christ took upon Himself my humanity, apart from which He could never have borne the penalty for my sins, He made me one with Himself. I am identified with Him. He not only died for me, but I died with Him. He took me with Himself into death, and His death was my death to sin. He took me through the Cross, down into the tomb, and out of the tomb on and beyond the reach of sin's dominion. This is the great basic fact. The Holy Ghost says to you and to me: Know ye--know that Christ took your place, fastened you to Himself (Himself being in your very humanity), and took you into death, and through death out into glorious resurrection and emancipation from sin's dominion.

Regardless of our feelings, we are to reckon on this great fact, --of our union with Christ in death and resurrection. "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 6:11, R.V.). Note that Paul does not say, reckon sin dead to you. God's way of victory over sin is not through the suppression of sinful desires, nor through the eradication of the old nature, nor yet through the cleansing of inbred sin. God's way of victory is through crucifixion--deliverance is only through death. There is a vast difference between reckoning myself dead to sin and reckoning sin dead to me. Every attempt to make sin dead to me, through self-effort, or struggle, or blessing, or make-believe, is not following the scriptural pattern. God says I am to reckon myself dead to sin. If I am willing to be rid of sin, let faith fasten on the fact of my death to sin through my actual life-union with Christ. I am "in Christ." And to be in Him is to be "dead to sin." Oh, to believe it! Never mind the feelings. Each time I come up against some particular sin, let me there say: I died to that in Christ. If it be a worldly attraction: I am crucified to the world and the world unto me. If it be proud, haughty self, again let me reckon: One died for all, all died. Then I should not, and need not, live unto myself--I am dead to my selfish pride and conceit and haughtiness. Let me do as the two young women who replied to an invitation to attend a hall: "We are very sorry, but it will be impossible for us to attend. We died last week. We are Christians." They had declared their testimony in baptism the previous week, as dead, buried, risen, and henceforth Christ-ones only.

It is said that Emperor William refused request for an audience prepared by a German-American. The Emperor declared that Germans born in Germany but naturalized in America became Americans: "I know Americans; I know Germans; but German-Americans I do not know." Even so, I was once bound in Adam. I am now freed in Christ. The cross cut me off, killed me outright to the old citizenship and life. I am no Adam-Christian. Such a position will get me no audience with my King, bring me no deliverance from bondage to the old man. Let me cease at once any such unholy duplicity. Let me declare that I am Christ's and His alone. Let me yield fully unto Him as one "dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:11).

IT MEANS EVERYTHING to me, as a Christian, that I was "born crucified,"--born all over again through death, the death of Jesus Christ. When I was saved, I accepted death as my only deliverance.

My sins deserved eternal death
But Jesus died for me.

Christ died in my place. I was indeed a dead man but for Christ. He died my death. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness" (1 Pet. 2:24). I must be either "dead in sins" or "dead to sin." If I am lost in Adam, I am "dead in sins." If I am saved through union with Christ, I am "dead to sin." When I accepted Christ's death for my sin, I could not avoid accepting my own death to sin. Christ died, not only for sin, but unto sin. I am committed to the cross. To attempt any other position is to involve myself in an infamous moral contradiction. My only logical standing is one of death. I have been "born crucified." It is a first principle of the Christian life.

This is no mere mechanical thing, no mere legal fiction. I am actually and vitally joined to Christ. But, like every other Bible truth, it calls for my hearty consent. That Christ indeed "liveth in me" is a glorious truth. If I am saved, that is no mere cold, lifeless imputation. It is a fact. But it is a truth that calls for my most cordial "Amen." That I may realize His indwelling, I am commanded to reckon myself dead unto sin but alive unto God in Christ Jesus. Such reckoning is not make-believe or, as someone said, "Trying to make yourself believe what isn't so." However, the reckoning of a lively faith implies m

ore than is usually realized.

Reckoning, in order to be real, includes self-renunciation. Our reckoning is doomed to failure unless we renounce self. In the power of Christ's death I must refuse my old life. On the basis of Calvary and of my oneness with Christ in His death, I must refuse to let self lord it over me. I must choose whether I'll be dominated by the hideous monster self, or Christ. The life that "Christ liveth in me" must have a happy "yet not I" at its very heart. How can I have the benefits of Christ's death while I still want my own way? Self must be dethroned. I am indeed promised newness of life, but only on the basis that I put off the old. If Christ went into the abysmal depths of self-emptying and self-renunciation, I must sink my old self-life into harmony with His ignominious departure. Let me with Samuel Rutherford "put my hand to the pen and let the Cross of the Lord Jesus have my submissive and resolute Amen."

When we thus begin to renounce self we shall find that this will generally be done through our submission to someone in the family or business circle. Home missions are good; foreign missions are better; but "submissions" at home and abroad are best of all. There are some women who will find practical victory at home through submitting to that husband's temper; some men through accepting the lashes of that long-tongued wife; others through embracing that seeming handicap or infirmity. Often we can believe for victory only around some such practical obedience. There self is renounced. Reckoning without the practical renunciation of self proves mere make-believe. It is just more self-righteousness, more self-effort.

Reckoning also includes rejection of sin. Paul says: "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin," and then adds, "Let not sin therefore reign." We should not let sin reign. That we already know. But better still, we need not let sin reign since we died and passed through death into resurrection beyond sin's dominion. Sin has no claim over those united to the Crucified, and sin "shall not have dominion" over those who yield themselves entirely to the Holy Spirit. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2). But as long as we have any controversy with the Holy Spirit we cannot escape sin's dominion. The Spirit of God is specific and the Scripture is plain. The "offending" member is to be done to death--not pampered, or even prayed about. It is indeed good to pray for blessings, and to cry out for clean hearts, but not when God says "cut off" and "pluck out." God has truly cut us off from all evil at the

Cross. He now says: It is yours to break with sin--let not sin therefore reign.

In order to have "a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men" how long has it been since I had to humble myself and be "put . . . to an open shame" before my family, or my business friend, or my Sunday school class, or my congregation? Dare I say that I have offended none and that the Holy Spirit has not pleaded with me in some such connection to obey Him? Christ was willingly set at naught, willingly classed with criminals. He willingly died to rid me of sin. Let me, then, not pamper, but pour contempt on all my pride. Let me go at once and humble myself. If I will not take my sin to the place of shame, cost me what it may to get rid of it, how can I claim the cutting-off power of Calvary? I am clear out of harmony with the Cross. Confession of sin implies rejection of sin. Its power is broken only as we come into harmony with the Cross. But the Cross is no place of concealment, of hiding, of covering sin. It is the place where we break with sin, the place of exposure, of guilt, of open shame. Let me be willing to lose face and abide by all the consequences. If Christ died to rid me of sin, should I not rather die than retain it? But if we are not yet sick enough of sin to be rid of sin, we can only bow, and bleed, and hug our chains, until we are "sick unto death" of sinful self. We must be driven out of our unholy duplicity and made to own our double-mindedness.

But God is good. Christ is a jealous lover. He wants every believer delivered. He will not shrink from reducing you to shame and despair if only you may be exposed to the power generated on your behalf at Calvary. You must learn by kindness or by terror. God's sword of providence may be laid successively to every tic that binds you to self and sin. Wealth, and health, and friends, may fall before that sword. The inward fabric of your life will go to pieces. Your joy will depart. Smit ten within and without, burned and peeled and blasted, you may finally, amidst the dreadful baptism, be driven from the sinful inconsistency of living for yourself. You may at length be disposed (blessed word--sweet compulsion) to yield self over to the victory and undoing of Calvary. Oh, the glorious power of the Cross! How can we longer hold out against it? All the power generated at Calvary is at your disposal.

In Bone of His Bone, F. J. Huegel tells about the strange lot of certain young ladies employed in a laboratory where contact with radium is inevitable. Upon entering this factory they know their fate is sealed. They will die. After a limited time they are released from their work with a handsome check for \$10,000. Doctors have examined girls who have thus toiled in contact with radium and have found by means of the X ray that a strange fire consuming the life burns in their bones. This most highly concentrated force is killing them. But a still more highly concentrated force was released at Calvary. There Heaven's radium was focused upon the great cancer of humanity's sin and shame. Radium kills. There is no power under Heaven that can stand its concentrated dynamic. "The Cross kills. The man who exposes himself to Calvary soon discovers that a hidden fire burns within his bones." Oh, let me, then, put no limit to its concentrated force. May its death

Miracles that follow the plow :: I Am Not Saved

-dealing, yea, life-giving and healing rays penetrate my most secret life, until its hidden fire burns in all the bones of my innermost being. Let the radium of the Crucified be applied again and again. It is a process. But let me not fear to expose myself to the divine treatment. If I am indeed sick of shams and hollow-hearted pretense--if my heart is hot with a veritable "furnace of desire" for deliverance--if my soul thirsts for the wells of living water, the full-orbed message of Calvary will be welcomed with joy unspeakable and full of glory. In all the gladness of Christ's glorious triumph let me say again and yet again: I have been and am crucified with Christ, it is no more I that live but Christ that liveth in me,--liveth in me, even me,--His own death-resurrection life, a life of death to sin and aliveness unto God.

Dying with Jesus,
By death reckoned mine;
Living with Jesus,
A new life divine.

Re:, on: 2008/3/21 18:46

Quote:
-----Is it really this simple? Grace is unmeritable, not for sale, cannot be worked for. Can I really come to Jesus and accept His grace? With nothing that I can or ever will be able to do? And He will be faithful? No matter how I feel?

My precious brother, that is the only way we can be justified before God. "For by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God." It's that simple and the LORD has already accepted you when He died on the cross to pay for your sins. All that is required from you and I is that we trust in Him and rely on Him for all our needs.

The grace of God is the most misunderstood gift of God to mankind, yet it's the most profound because mankind cannot understand it. That's why men heap to themselves teachers having itching ears to try to draw up a scheme so that they can 'earn' their salvation through works.

The moment we believe the Gospel and receive Jesus Christ by faith, we instantly are made righteous. There is not a thing that you can do to make yourself more righteous.

If you have been on the road of a 'works' based gospel I can understand your doubt and unbelief. There is no faith in the law, because the law made no one perfect, but the bringing in of a new covenant did.

Welcome Richard to the true road of righteousness which is by grace through faith. Study the Grace of God which Jesus offers by faith.

God Bless