

**General Topics :: From the Slums of Scotland to the Glory of Calvary (Part Three)****From the Slums of Scotland to the Glory of Calvary (Part Three), on: 2006/2/6 22:02**

I had a new heart indeed. I was alive and I could not believe how it felt. I could take my son in my arms and tell him how much I loved him. For the first time in my life I genuinely cared for my wife and son.

My new life was now completely different. It took me three days to realize that I did not curse any more. The drink and drugs were gone, overnight. The real miracle was being able to take my son in my arms and tell him I loved him. To look at my wife, and see a person with feelings and needs, was all new to me. Now I walked away from arguments with Angie, and she did not like it. Before, we would go toe to toe and see who could be the nastiest, of course I would always "win," because the one who cares least, "wins." Now I was happy to walk away because the Lord had taken the hatred out of my heart and I could see the futility of it.

A couple of years passed and Angie fell pregnant at 29. I had persuaded her to come off the pill. I am not sure if it was because I wanted another child or because I thought it was wrong. One week before my youngest, who has down syndrome, was born (we had no idea there was anything wrong) I came home from church and was so full of the Lord, I sat down and wrote this letter to my mum and dad. I had no idea why I was writing this or what the content would be but the Holy Spirit urged me to write.

Dear mum and dad

A blessing to you in the name of Jesus, Jesus is the mighty king, He is the Lion of Judah. There are many voices in this world who would say that He is weak or dead and that we are alone, that is a lie from hell itself. We serve a mighty God who has authority over kings and presidents, over nations and empires. Satan and the mighty demons tremble in the presence of Jesus. There is not a hair on your head that He does not know. The Lord Himself, in the garden of Gethsemane was tried to His very core, even His closest friends had fallen asleep on Him. And in His agony, in His despair, He cried out to His Father, "Father, take this cup from me", at that very second we see the Lord's humanity, He is so able to understand our situations. Sometimes we would question, "why Lord", but there is always a reason.

The Lord cried from the cross "my God, my God, why has thou forsaken me", at that very point He touched man's lowest ebb, despair, hell itself. I do not know, but I imagine that this was the hardest moment for our Father as He watched His Son hang from that cross and withdraw His presence. The Father in His infinite wisdom and mercy and love for us, sacrificed His Son, Oh the agony the Father felt, but now the perfect wisdom of our Father is shown. There is nothing now His Son does not know, His dying and rising, formed in perfection, is now the hope of mankind. Our Jesus is alive and He knows us inside out. He will never abandon us.

And when our time comes to come into the very presence of the living God, when we kneel before the precious lamb of God, when we become one with our Lord, then we will know all that the Lord has done for us. It is an honor and a privilege to serve the Christ. I tremble at the very thought of coming into the very presence of Almighty God. We simply can't imagine, our minds are totally inadequate to realize the Glory of our Lord.

May the Lord strengthen you and fill you with His glory. The victory is already won, let us wait upon the Lord.

Well, two weeks after Daniel was born, this letter arrived back at my house. My mother informed me that this letter was not for her, but was for me. I sat down and read the letter and wept and sobbed to realize that the Almighty God of the universe had not only "sent me a letter", but that He was sharing His pain as a Father with me. Not only was He healing me at this point, but my mind snapped back to the time my older son had been very badly burned, 60% of his body, third degree burns, and I had to, as part of the treatment in hospital, hold him down in salt baths every day. He was only two years old at that time and would scream and look at me. His eyes were saying "why are you doing this to me", your supposed to be protecting me". I would have given my very life at this point to spare him from the pain and suffering. It was so traumatic, my hair started falling out. Now all these years later I was finally realizing, as much as any human being can, the full extent of our heavenly Father's sacrifice. Our mind cannot comprehend the pain our Father suffered. And at any point He could have stopped it, but He loved us so much He let it happen. To reject this sacrifice is what separates the saved from the unsaved. This is what we will be judged upon. Not how good we are, or how Holy we are, but have we accepted Jesus as God's Holy and only way to heaven. To be born-again means that the old Frank has given his whole life to Jesus. The old person is dead and behold, all things are new. We have become new creatures in Christ and we ever live to serve our God. Jesus says "all who seek to gain their life shall lose it, all who lose their life for my sake shall gain everlasting life." He also says we shall know them by their fruit, those who do the will of my Father are my disciples, an

d you shall know them by their love for their brothers and sisters in Christ. We must love, above all else.

Six weeks after Daniel was born, I went to the DR to check out some problems I had been having. After many tests and a lung biopsy the Doctor told me that I had a disease called Pulmonary Fibrosis (Sarcoidosis) and that it was chronic and in its third stage. They did not know where it comes from and there was no cure, but with treatment I could perhaps avoid a lung transplant. If I did not take the medicine my lungs would shrivel up and I would die.

Just after finding this out, and also trying to cope with the birth of Daniel, my wife asked me while we were lying in bed one evening "Have you ever been unfaithful to me?" Now, having been a Christian for three years, I was not one of those people who felt the need to "unburden," myself. Yet, here, in the midst of dealing with a newly born mentally handicapped child with a life threatening condition, and my own life now overshadowed by this disease, I confessed to my wife that I had been unfaithful, more than once. These were three bombshells that threatened to finally blow our marriage to pieces. Yet, by the grace of God, and Him alone, forgiveness was found that night. And even although my wife was not a believer, she had witnessed the radical change in me over the previous three years. She trusted the new Frank, what she really trusted was the Lord Jesus Christ who had changed me, we shed many tears, and before the dawn had broken, forgiveness and light shone onto this, the darkest secret of our marriage. When the enemy came in like a flood, the Lord Jesus had raised up a standard, and the standard was love and forgiveness and what the enemy had designed for our destruction, the Lord Jesus used this as a foundation that would not be shaken.

After just a few weeks of taking the steroids, that small still, beautiful, precious voice spoke into my spirit. "Frank, come a way with me, I am your life, I am your stillness, I am your peace when all around you is falling apart, trust in me....trust in me." I stopped taking the pills. The world rose up against this simple act of obedience and there were many voices, so many voices but the small still voice said....."Trust in me.....trust in me."

Several weeks passed, and the many voices seemed to be right. My ability to breathe declined. It is imperative to notice that the small still voice made me no promises, my only command was to "trust." A well known man of God from the last century said this "Lord, may I be an ox on the altar or an ox in the field." None of us really know our purpose here in life, what we do know is that we have been called to bring honor to the name of Jesus, regardless of our situation.

There will be a time, or times, in every Christian's life, when He will "Make you lie down in green pastures." You may think to yourself, what is so "Green Pastures," about a diagnosis of incurability or possible death. Let me tell you something brothers and sisters in Christ, when we have complete dependence upon God, even although we did not choose it (He makes you lie down) you will be in a place that is almost beyond description. The windows of heaven will open, you will hear heavenly choirs of angels, you will feel the sun on your face and it will feel so good, you will mount up with wings as eagles and soar high above the things of earth. From down through the centuries the martyr's will call out to you and the same Spirit that comforted them in their greatest trials and allowed them to sing psalms of glory, even as the flames began to consume their temporal bodies, that same Spirit will burn like a mighty furnace in your chest, and if men could look into your situation, they would say "there is one like the son of man with Him," and they would be right.

Ten weeks after coming off the pills, I heard the phone ring at 5.30 on a Monday morning. How many of us know that when the phone rings at late hours or the "wee small hours of the morning," that it is usually significant, much like a loud knock on the door in the middle of the night. This phone call would be perhaps the most significant phone call of my life. It was my mother calling from five thousand miles away. She apologized for calling so early, but she had been compelled by the Holy Spirit. She very simply stated "The Lord told me that He was going to heal you." "The Lord has instructed me to attend a certain prayer meeting this week and to pray for you and He is going to heal you." I find it significant that my mom was instructed to call and tell me beforehand. This was an act of faith, trust, obedience, this was a "stepping out,"

As she spoke, I was overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit, I fell to my knees and in my spirit I knew that I was to be healed, I had no doubt whatsoever. I went for an x-ray two days later. The Doctor called me into his office, he seemed subdued. I had shared with him all those weeks before that I was putting my life in the hands of the Lord. He flicked the light of the x-ray board on and pointed to my lungs, they were completely clear. Apparently the Lord does not know the meaning of the word, "irreversible." That was ten years ago, and, as many of my friends could testify, my lungs are in good shape :)

The Lord is so good, no matter what your situation is today, if you will trust Him, not even so much for healing, just trust Him, then you will fly where the eagles fly and you will venture into the realm of the miraculous, into the land of the dynamic.

mic, for trust is the gateway to the kingdom of God. This kingdom is here and it is now, since we have to walk through this life, let us walk together in the kingdom that was, and is, and is to come and the night will shine like the day.

His Rest

I have been to a glorious land
That is far beyond what I had planned
Beyond this world and all its dreams
That lies in the shadow of His Holy wings

I followed Him and we took flight
And He carried me on beyond the night
Through a veil of darkness, pain and fear
My sweet Jesus was oh so near

Majesty, glory, praise to our King
There are no words that I can sing
That would fully express what He is to me
As He carried me across a majestic sea

Mountainous waves rose up to fight
Yet in His hand I was held so tight
Farther, farther, farther along
In an ocean of praise, and on the wings of a song

He took me to the promised land
And I lay down in the palm of His Hand
At the top of the mountain, at the bottom of the sea
In the darkest dungeon, no matter, for I am free

In our Christian lives we will face many struggles. Some will be harder than others. One of the key elements in our Christian walk is obedience and trust in the Lord. Circumstances will come and test our faith. Some will seem insurmountable, but of course "We can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." In the book of Genesis, Joseph is an excellent example of how we should act in the midst of calamity and injustice. Even in the darkest moments we have to hold on to the fact that we are His, there is a purpose for things that we suffer and go through. It is in the darkest moments when the light of Christ is so sweet.

Storm

Can I walk upon this water
In the midst of this mighty sea
Surely I will stumble, surely I will drown
Oh Lord how can this be

The waves are high and the wind it howls
And the rain it lashes down
Yet you are there, I see you Lord
Now I know I shall not drown

Then the thunder roars and the lightening flashes
High above in the angry skies
Dark clouds rising, set on fire
To them do I lift my eyes

Heavier now the rain is falling
The noise so loud I cannot think
The lightening fractures the sky above
And my legs, they begin to sink

I look around , eyes wide with terror
As all this madness does unfold
I look once more, there , it's Jesus
In the midst of the storm , standing bold

I am your peace when all hell breaks loose
Devils and demons flee
In the storm, in the night, when all breaks down
Remember , keep your eyes upon me.

Shelter

Give me shelter from the storm
I'm so cold please keep me warm
Let me cry, cry upon
Cry upon your shoulder

Wipe these tears from upon my face
In your arms a warm embrace
Take me to that Holy place
To cry upon your shoulder

Give me strength when I am down
When there's no-one else around
In your arms I shall be found
My head upon your shoulder

Oh sweet Jesus comfort me
For your love shall always be
I was bound but now I'm free
To cry upon your shoulder.

This poem also belongs in this section, although I did think of this as I flew into Glasgow Airport in Scotland . My family and I returned there in 1995 for a year, to share the good news of Jesus. We took a step of faith and the Lord was so good and I was privileged to see souls won for Christ. My thinking was as we were just about to descend, hey, even although there is mostly clouds in the sky in Scotland, here I was above the clouds in a place that was perpetually blue. And just because you could not see it, did not mean that it was not there. When darkness covers our lives, it is a comforting thought to know that the Lord is always there, and that these clouds will pass.
Ever Present

Beyond every cloud I know it's true
The sun shines bright and the sky is blue
If we only had eyes that could truly see
That despite human chains, we are surely free

So do not stand still, frozen to the ground
Let your spirit fly, in the air to be found
And when the dark clouds threaten to consume
Always remember that there's an empty tomb
And that Jesus our Lord, reigns on high
An eternal Son, an eternal blue sky

A Table Before Me

When all seems lost and

darkness covers your land
The man that praises God,
He's the man that will stand

I lift up my eyes
Where does my help come from
I look out my door
And still there's a raging storm

My help comes from the Lord
Maker of Heaven and earth
No matter how fierce the storm
My Lord I will always serve

So praise God in the day
Praise God also in the night
And you will find the strength my child
To go on in the fight

Day by day and week by week
The Lord has watched you toil
I have planted you right where you are
I have planted you in Holy soil.

These are some poems that describe a time when I could not hear from the Lord . It was a very confusing time , yet also a learning time . My wife bought me a flying lesson for Christmas and the pilot was very informative , telling me what was required to become a fully licensed pilot. One of the most important tests was the instruments test . This was done at night when the pilot had absolutely no visual aids to help him reach his final destination . He had to rely completely on the CO-ordinates that were given to him . There are times in our life when we will not "feel" the Lord's presence . And yet we have the scriptures which will be a lamp unto our feet and a reminder of God's promises , regardless of how or what we "feel". I have personally found these times the hardest times in my walk with the Lord. When a great trial comes upon us, often times we are compelled to fall into the Lord's arms and that is a great place to be. Yet it is the times when our lives are going smoothly, just everyday living, that can be the most challenging. That is why it is so important to keep our relationship with the Lord as our number one priority. We must remember that there are many reasons for not hearing the Lord, to often in the last few years people have begun to seek the Lord in all the wrong places because of a desperate dryness and lack of communication. Many times the problem can be found by looking in the mirror, but just as many times the Lord is teaching us faith. Trying to figure out which of these it is can almost drive you mad and I have tried to capture some of my own struggles in this area. Let me assure all who read this and know the Lord, you will not wander in the desert forever. There are many "Golden calves" out there who would be worshipped, do not be fooled, your party will not be in the desert, your party will come when by obedience and patience and long-suffering, you enter into the promised land. Take heart and know that David himself at times thought the Lord had fallen asleep on him. Perhaps some of your "deserts," have lasted for years, perhaps every so often you find an oasis and think the desert is over, and then only to discover you are back again. God is looking for faithful servants who will seek the giver and not the gift. Lift up your eyes and know that our Lord has seen the afflictions of His people and has not forgotten any of us. Long-suffering and despair is not something you hear much about today, but it will come against the "Body," and we will overcome. St. John of the Cross wrote hundreds of years ago about "The dark night of the soul." If you are going through this right now, be encouraged , there is a light at the end of your tunnel and many others are with you in this "darkness."

Drought
Through the window of my soul
I see that the drought continues
I am walking through a dry and dusty land
And my bones are indeed growing old

I am in the midst of the hottest summer

And the humidity has sapped my soul
I look out upon the horizon of my Spirit
The is not a cloud in sight

I shall stand upon the Holy mountain
And shout out to the Lord my God
I shall dash my idols on the Rock
And declare the wondrous works of the almighty

And from beyond the mountain , a cloud appears
Thick and heavy with the rain
I am totally dependent on the Lord
And I am drenched with His life once again

Silence In The Darkness

Only silence in the darkness
I lift my voice and cry
Has thou oh Lord forgotten me
If so, then I must die

Everyday I come before thee
And shout out to thee so loud
I offer sacrifice, my very life
And still IÂ'm covered by a cloud

Lord how long will this continue
There is no-where left that I can go
I walk through the valley of dry bones
Where is the Spirit, in the river I must flow

Oh land of milk and honey
It seems that I have lost my way
Shall I forever wander in this desert
Let it not be oh Lord I pray

I shall come to the Rock of testing
And discover the meaning of grace
I cannot attain my own righteousness
Only the waters that flow from this place

Fog

I cannot see the road ahead
And yet I know itÂ's there
I cannot always feel your presence
Yet I continue in my prayer

You will never leave me Lord
This I know is true
The storm has come and done itÂ's worse
Now the sky above is blue

The sun is shining , the birds are singing
The treeÂ's sway gently in the breeze

And once again I found out that
I'll find you on my knee's

Thankyou Lord for your presence
It is so sweet to me
I marvel at your love and Mercy
I'm so glad that your grace is free

Call Upon His Name

Oh precious Lord I call on you
Call upon your Holy name
Oh precious Lord send your Spirit now
Come and light your Holy flame

Oh precious Lord in times of need
When there's no-one else around
Oh precious Lord it seems like your not there
And there's no help to be found

Oh precious Lord , will I never learn
Whether hills or depths of seas
That I will always find you Lord
When I get upon my knees

Oh precious Lord, I call on you
And exalt your Holy name
I praise you Lord and I worship you
And I praise your Holy flame

Oh precious Lord, I call on you
Call upon your Holy name
Yesterday , today , and forever Lord
You will always be the same

Just as surely as you entered that dark place, with faith and trust, you will endure and come out the other side. And when your faith has been tried and tested, you will walk in quiet confidence. You will have learned what is truly important. No matter what trial that would beset you, because of Him you can endure all things. The very purpose in your sufferings is the hope that carries you through. To be able to see the world for what it truly is , to see the bigger picture, to look at life through the eyes of Jesus , this is our strength.

His presence , His beauty , His Will, His Love , His plans, these are the things that the Royal Priest concerns himself with. The world will be amazed when you have contentment, despite the circumstances. In order to achieve contentment, we must check our attitude and our perspective. Once we realize why we are here and for what a short time we are here for, it will help us focus on the end result. If we can focus on Jesus and His sufferings and what He did for us, then we can overcome, just as He overcame, with contentment . If we focus on what we have and who we are in Christ Jesus, then the old Hymn is correct in saying " Cast you eyes upon Jesus, look full into his wonderful face, and the things of this world will grow strangely dim, in the light of His Glory and Grace ."

Jesus

He is the Alpha and Omega
The beginning and the end
He is my Master and my Savior

He is the Christ and he's my friend

When I've lost my way , and darkness falls
And the way ahead's not clear
He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords
His love casteth out all fear

When I have no strength to carry on
And I call into the night
The Anointed one, The Prince of peace
Gives me grace to carry on the fight

So call Him now, He is the Lord
He's the God that healeth thee
He loved you so, He died for you
His blood flowed from Calvary

Lord

Love without ceasing
It has no end
You my Lord and my Savior
My Master, my friend

I could travel to a distant planet
And I would find you there
I could sail the seven seas
And know that you are everywhere

The deepest depths, the Highest heights
No matter where I go
You are there in all your glory
And in your Spirit I must flow.

You are the Morning star, The rising sun
You set my heart ablaze
I can do nothing more but stand in awe
And sing of your glory and Grace

The Candle

Oh hallelujah, who lit the candle
Oh hallelujah my Savior it be
Oh hallelujah may this candle forever
Burn gloriously and brightly deep within me

For I was a sinner, so cold and rejected
No light in my tunnel that I could see
Then the candle was lit and the darkness was vanquished
And now and forever in His arms I will be

The things of this world no longer enthrall

I'm walking and talking and living with He
The one from above, my Savior, my Jesus
He died in my place that I may be free

Though the wind is still blowing, often times howling
And the storm clouds gather to come against me
I'll stand on the Rock, my eyes towards heaven
And the candle, yes the candle's still burning in me

So we praise you for the candle, most Holy Father
Glorious Jesus, forever you'll be
Higher than the heavens, enthroned in your glory
For you are the candle that burns brightly in me

When we do come through many trials and the Lord has lifted us up, many times there is a tendency to take some of that glory that belongs to the Lord. Spiritual pride is deadly. Nothing will stop us more in our tracks than this. Satan knows all about this one and he uses it to great effect. The outcome is self-righteousness and alienation. Not only will we be alienated from the world around us, we will also burn bridges. It is no wonder that the scriptures tell us to humble ourselves in His sight and He will exalt us. It also tells us that God resists the proud. Pride is a master of deception and also a master of disguise. Often times the remedy will be very painful as the Lord humbles us and enables us to come back into His presence.

The main problem for Christians seems to be that there is no apparent neutral ground in scripture. We are either walking in humility or we are walking in its opposite, pride. This is why the Bible attaches so much importance to humility, for if in the secular world one is proud, it may not have any significant consequences for one's life. However, Christians who fall into the trap of pride separate themselves from God. 1st Pet 5:5 "God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble." So we see that if we want to draw close to God, it must be in humility. In James 4:7,8 it says, "Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." We have already seen that we must approach God in humility, so therefore James teaches that we must resist the temptation of pride if we are to remain humble.

Paul says in Romans 12:3 "For I say, through the grace of God given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think. But to think soberly as God has dealt each one a measure of Faith."

I remember watching a documentary called "The Killing Room." It was secretly filmed in a Chinese State orphanage. Most of the children were girls or mentally handicapped. This was due in part to cultural attitudes but more specifically to the "One child policy." The killing room is where they would leave a baby to die. Periodically, a four or five year old would go in and check the "progress" of the dying child. The eyes of the little baby girl was so distressing. It reminded me of my son's eyes when he was treated for his burns, fear confusion and so much pain. She died and I wept with relief that her suffering was over. The older child would inform the adult when the child was dead.

This was horrifying to me and raised such contempt and anger in my Spirit. The treatment of the mentally handicapped was very rough and uncaring, they were often tied to "Potty chairs" for ten or twelve hours at a time. They had taken to rocking back and forward in a kind of madness. I have a Down Syndrome child and so my contempt for these state workers was great, perhaps even verging on hatred. As well as having Down Syndrome, my son also has what is called "Hirschbrungs disease" which is a disease of the bowel. Consequently, at the age of almost seven he is still not potty trained. This can be very tiring, especially when he would decide to be artistic with the contents of his diaper. One morning he was covered from head to toe in excrement. I pulled him roughly from his bedroom and pushed him into the toilet. As I angrily tried to clean him, shouting something about "I don't know why you do this" and feeling very sorry for myself, I caught a glimpse of his scared face. In that instant, the Lord reminded me of the feelings I had felt towards those state workers. Just as I was thinking of this, Daniel reached forward and kissed me and put his arms around me and patted my back. Proudful haughty thoughts were painfully ripped from my spirit as I cried tears of humility and sorrow.

There is no one incident in my battles against pride. My striving for humility through sanctification is a lifelong concern. The more I focus on Jesus and who He is and compare myself to Him, then the easier this task is. This is a discipline and not a natural inclination. As human beings it is so tempting to compare ourselves to others, but this never produces humility. And so, as it seems to be with everything we do, we must keep our eyes firmly fixed on Jesus. This is not only t

he way to overcome pride and walk in humility, it is the way to overcome, period.

The Killing Room(an unknown baby girl dies in China alone)

Who cries for the children
Who cries when they weep
Her cries are lost in the darkness
How is it we can sleep

In the dark of the night
When I lay in my bed
When the light goes out
She is still in my head

An unheld child who knows no touch
The pain is intense, it is too much
Thinner now, eyes growing dim
Soon she will know the touch of Him

She lies in a room not knowing why
The pain is intense, and she has to die
At last ,at last her eyes shut tight
No more crying , no more pain , and with her wings she takes flight

And people say, if there's a God , how can this be
But they refuse to open up and so they cannot see
That it is man's greed, his lust for more
That continues to keep the poor man poor

Now she lies in our Saviors arm
At last free from pain and this world's harm
So the pain must stop and the hurting cease
Only through Jesus will this world find peace.

Humble Thyself

Hey, this is my world of pride
Don't you know that I am dying here inside
This is a world where I am never wrong
The silence has overwhelmed me and the night has lost it's song

I am an Island in an ocean of people
Strong and unmoveable , like an old church steeple
There was a time when there were many bridges here
That time is gone, never to return I fear

And the air is filled with the smell of burning embers

One by one the bridges fall and no-one cares or even remembers
The days I walked and laughed with Him
There was a beauty, a peace that came from deep within.

And I cared for people and they cared for me
And all because of Him that hung upon that tree
Now I care no more and there's one bridge left to burn
And I hold the match because there's nowhere else to turn

And Satan says, burn it now
And Jesus says, listen here to me
The time has come to give this up
To come across the bridge on bended knee

And I will show you how to live
And soar with the eagles high above
The beam is gone and now I see
That His banner over me is love.

It is important never to judge yourself according to other men, this is a tactic of a self-righteous heart and draws us away from the Lord in pride and self-righteousness, we must keep our eyes upon Jesus and see how we measure up to His standard and His word, this will surely keep us humble.

There is not a book big enough to tell of all the things that the Lord has done in my life. The Lord has taken me from the slums of Scotland, to live in one of the wealthiest counties in America. Most importantly He has transformed my heart. He has sustained me through the deserts of life, humbled me when I got too big for my boots, withdrew His presence from me for various reasons. I have been a Christian for nine years now and can safely say that the Lord has never left me nor forsaken me. I have found out the hard way that the most important aspect of my life is my relationship with the Lord.

As Christians, we can go through anything this life can throw at us when we are walking with the Lord. If we neglect our relationship, or put other things before the Lord, if we have our priorities mixed up, then we can be in a world of trouble. When trouble strikes and we have drifted from the Lord, then there can be no greater fear. It is the lone sheep that gets picked off by the wolf. It is vital that we stay close to the shepherd. He is our guide, He protects us and keeps us from harm. He leads us to rich pastures even if it is many miles away. Often times we have to negotiate low valley's and high mountain passes to get to where we need to go, but the shepherd knows the road, for He has walked it before. When we join the Lord's flock, listen to Him. At all costs follow His direction, even when it makes no sense. If He says go, then you must go. The Holy Spirit will lead us and guide us into all truth, it is so important that you listen when He calls, for the consequences of doing things our own way can be severe.

Jesus is our flowing river of love. I would like to finish this book by looking at exactly who Jesus is. Of course He is known by many names and untold stories have been written about our Lord. From life and from the scriptures, this is who I have discovered Jesus to be.

There is no doubt that Jesus is God eternal. The Gospel of John, right at the start states "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." (John 1:1) This is a clear statement of the preexistence of Christ who is the Divine Word. Throughout His life and ministry, the question would be asked over and over again, who is this man? Was He simply a "good teacher," as the rich young ruler referred to Him? Jesus refutes that (Mk15:2). He certainly was a good teacher but He was so much more. Jesus' life and ministry would gradually reveal who He was. Although it should have been clear from the outset of His ministry who He was, His life and ministry and His resurrection would confirm His identity.

His authority over the Temple was revealed (Mk11:15-19). His power over demons (Mk1:27, 32-34), His power over sickness and disease (Mk4:35-41), His power over the Sabbath (Mk2:23-28), and even over death itself (Mk5:21-43) was made known. All of these actions point to the fact that God had come down and was walking with men. The disciples would finally understand exactly who Jesus was, but it took some time. Near the beginning of His ministry, Jesus, on the Sabbath day, read from the Prophet Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted. To proclaim liberty to the captives. And recovery of sight to the blind. To set at liberty those who are oppressed. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." (ISA 61:12) He closed the book and told them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

He was pronouncing Himself the Savior, sent from God. And yet this was rejected by the people saying, "Is this not Joseph's son?" (Lk4:22) There would be many times Jesus' words and actions clearly revealed who He was, whether he was answering a question from John the Baptist, or teaching the crowd as in John 6. His person, who He was, always affirmed. Peter says, "You have the Words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." (Jn6:68-69)

Jesus was who He said He was. His disciples and followers would all come to recognize this fact. Even though Jesus would authenticate Himself through His Words and actions, His characteristics would be plainly seen as He went about the work His father had set before Him. One of Jesus' main traits, which we as believers must develop, was His dependency on God The Father. Jesus' life was a remarkable example of one who was not dependent on His own resources, but completely dependent on His Father in Heaven (JN5:19,20). If we are to be like Him, we must follow His example. Every work that we do, if we want to succeed, must be a work of God through us. Everything else is vanity and will not produce eternal fruit. After Jesus had fasted for forty days in the desert, it is clear that He had the power to turn the stones into loaves of bread (MT4:4). What would be the sin in that? Jesus certainly had the power and the resources to feed Himself. First of all, He would not be led by Satan in anything. Secondly and most importantly, He would rely on God the Father to feed Him. His dependency would be on His Father for all things, including His daily bread (MT4:11). This dependency would continue all the way to the cross.

Another characteristic we see in Jesus, and perhaps the most important, is obedience and submission to the Will of God. The very fact that our Lord came to earth was an act of submission and obedience. Only when we are truly submitted can we see genuine obedience like Jesus. People can be obedient for all sorts of reasons and can comply with a grudging heart and a whole range of different motives. Jesus' motivation for obedience was His love and honor of His Father. The culmination of His submission and obedience was seen clearly at Gethsemane and ultimately the cross. For it was clearly the Will of God the Father that the Son shall come (JN3:16,17). In the garden of Gethsemane Jesus cries, "Oh My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless, not as I will but as you will" (MT 26:39). This is the clearest example in scripture of the obedience and submission of Jesus to His Father. This should be the cry of all Jesus' followers. By following in Jesus footsteps we should always seek God's will, not our own.

Jesus was also full of compassion. In His life He suffered much abuse, hatred, torture, rejection and so on. He is well acquainted with all of our human sufferings and many times displayed His compassion. When Jesus saw the multitudes, He had compassion for them because they were wondering in sin like lost sheep and had no shepherd who would teach them the truth (Mt9:36). And so we see that Jesus was not coldly or robotically carrying out set tasks. His combination of obedience, submission, dependency, and compassion would lead Him all the way to the cross.

Our Savior is not a dispassionate God, merely proving Himself worthy, although He did certainly do that. He is a God that knows His people intimately and hurts when they hurt. We see this clearly when His friend Lazarus dies. "Jesus wept" (Jn 11:35). How comforting to know that Jesus can mourn with us in our times of loss, when we lose a loved one. Yes we know that our saved loved ones will be in Heaven, and I am sure Jesus knew where His friend would go when He died, yet he wept with compassion for the suffering of those who were left behind. Jesus taught in "The Sermon on the Mount," that those who mourn would be blessed and comforted. Little did the people who mourned for Lazarus realize just how, in this particular incident, Jesus planned to comfort them. It clearly says that Jesus "groaned in His Spirit and was troubled." Again, it is comforting to know that Jesus knows every facet of human suffering and that our "High Priest," is well able to intercede intimately on our behalf. And Lazarus was raised to the Glory of God.

Jesus was also full of passion. When He saw the state of the Temple, His Father's house, He was filled with righteous indignation and anger. Here was the temple of the Living God, considered one of the wonders of the ancient world, transformed into a "Den of thieves." Livestock everywhere, undoubtedly messing where they stood, creating a horrendous smell, and all for the sake of making money, money the changers could undoubtedly help you with as they ripped off unsuspecting pilgrims. This must have resembled a bazaar rather than the house of God. One can only imagine the confusion and the scene as an angry Jesus began to drive these defilers out of the temple, overturning the tables and crying out, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations but you have made it a den of thieves" (MT 11:17).

This part of Jesus' character is really only seen in this passage. When we consider the characteristics of God, it would be foolish to ignore certain ones and focus on the ones we are comfortable with. Our God is a God of justice and His anger can be aroused, although slowly. When we consider all the things that Jesus had to listen to and witness, it is remarkable, and a testimony to His meekness and patience and obedience, that we do not see more displays of anger. It surely surprised His followers to see Him so upset. And yet Jesus' character had always been uncompromising. No one would ever accuse Jesus of sugar coating anything. No matter who the person was or how important they were, Jesus spoke without fear of man. When the Pharisees plotted against Him and sent the Herodians out to test Him, He says to them plainly, "Why do you test me you Hypocrites" (Mt22:18). In Matthew 23 Jesus confront the scribes and Pharisees and exposes them as nothing more than hypocrites. These were all powerful men, leaders of the community. Jesus spoke the truth, regardless of the consequences.

Jesus was so full of love and compassion. While He healed as part of His authentication, Jesus also healed because He cared deeply about people. This care can be seen in His dealings with the lepers. They were the untouchables of Jesus' day. Their fate was a horrifying one. Not only would they suffer horrendously and ultimately die, they were completely shunned by society. They were not allowed to enter towns and had to shout, "unclean" if they came near anyone. Often townsfolk would throw rocks at them and jeer. Perhaps one of the most touching moments in the ministry of Jesus was when a Leper shouted to Him, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean" (Mt8:5). Jesus then did the unthinkable. He touched this man (how men today still desperately need a touch from Jesus). Now Jesus could have easily healed this man without touching him. All He had to do was speak the word and it would be done, for as we know the Lord has all authority, including over diseases. "Jesus put out His hand and touched him saying, I am willing, be cleansed" (Mt8:3). Jesus touched the untouchable with compassion and love and healing. Jesus has been doing that every day since then.

His compassion reached into the gutters of life. He is no respecter of persons. He will accept anyone who comes to Him just as they are. Man-made gods have always been out of the reach of common men. A line from a famous hymn says, "If salvation was a thing that money could buy, then the rich would live and the poor would die." Every man-made deity that has come forth from man's imagination had no time for the poor and the afflicted and the downtrodden. The true and living God is intimately involved with people from every walk of life. Our God came and walked amongst us.

He laughed and cried, wept, He hungered and labored hard for food. He did not live in a palace, but lived amongst ordinary men. He was not robed in purple and gold. He was not carried aloft on men's shoulders and did not ride a magnificent stallion. Our Jesus walked and suffered the heat of the day. He knew hunger and He knew thirst. He knew what it was to work very hard and undoubtedly had callused hands. His hands would not be soft and gentle like the hands of the gentile kings and men of great wealth. He did not live in an ivory castle. In fact the Son of Man had nowhere to lay His head. Our God walked this earth and the words that He spoke would not be the words of a philosopher or men who spent their time on Mars Hill. He did not sit around all day and dazzle men with His brilliance. In every way he lived life as a man.

Yes He was the Son of God and performed mighty miracles, but He would be spared nothing, under God the Father. He lived as other men lived and knew the sufferings of the ordinary man. He had a path before Him and it was His to walk. This path had been formed before the foundations of the earth was laid. Before the stars in the heavens above were placed, Jesus' destiny was known. He would walk this earth and be a man acquainted with grief. His life would culminate in betrayal, mockery, abandonment and torture. The very flesh would be ripped from His back and His beard pulled out. Little men would spit in the face of the Almighty.

They would beat a crown of thorns in His head and drag Him to a hill and hang Him from a cross amongst thieves. And all that would be the easy part. He would then drink fully the cup that had been prepared for Him. All the sins of the world would be laid upon Him. And in the darkest moment of history, one that cannot be imagined, the Father turned His head and looked away. The full horror of hell, now visited upon The one who was one with the Father, and He would suffer our punishment in our place. And in the most agonizing cry ever uttered, Jesus cried out, "My God, My God, why has thou forsaken me." Only when one comes before God for judgment, and then cast away from His presence, will that one even begin to imagine the horror Jesus suffered for each and every one of us.

The Character of Jesus is higher than the highest heavens. His love and compassion and mercy and obedience are beyond what our feeble minds can comprehend. And since we can only compare with what we know, we can say with full assurance, and still fall pitifully short, that our Savior's love would render the deepest ocean to but a single tear from the Master's eye. The sun that blazes brilliantly in the sky, but a spark compared to our Lord's burning passion. The universe and all others combined, smaller than the smallest chambers of His heart. This is the God we serve; this is the Jesus of the Gospels; this is Jesus, God amongst us: The Bread of Life, The True vine, the Good shepherd, the Light of the World, The way, the Truth and the Life, The Gate for the sheep, Yahweh, Victorious Champion, Master, Lord, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Resurrection and the Life, Lamb of God, Worthy to be praised, Hope of mankind, Every breath that I take, Mighty councilor, Almighty, The Christ, My Savior, The Anointed One, The Prince of Peace, The Alpha and the Omega, The Beginning and the End, The Author and the Finisher of our faith, Messiah, The Potter, The Comforter, The Conqueror, Creator, Ancient of Days, The Living Water, Majestic, Omnipotent, The King Eternal, The Everlasting Father, The Exalted One, Faithful and True, A Father to the fatherless, the Fire that burns within, My Rock and my Fortress, The Foundation of the world, The Fountain of Life, The God that Healeth thee, Higher than the heavens, Incorruptible, Infallible, My Keeper, The Lion of Judah, My Righteousness, My Strength, Merciful, The mighty One of Israel. He is Perfect..... He is the Lord my God and He is one God. I shall love the Lord my God with all of heart. I shall praise the Lord my

General Topics :: From the Slums of Scotland to the Glory of Calvary (Part Three)

y God with all of my soul.....Let Jesus be praised! He is all these things and so much more. But most importantly, He is alive!In the Beauty of Holiness

Re: From the Slums of Scotland to the Glory of Calvary (Part Three) - posted by GaryE (), on: 2006/2/7 0:30

This is a very good testimony and a very good post. Frank, you are a very good writer.

In Christ,
GaryE

Re: Fantastic testimony - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/2/7 8:42

Frank, Reading this is discovering a real person behind the words. It is a beautiful and moving expression of God's work in your life. You don't just give a theological definition of "faith", you express it with your own life and heart.

I like the poems, and wonder if you wrote any of them. Are they on a website somewhere?

Also, are parts one and two available to read?

As a result of my work with the developmentally challenged I wrote this, and I can see that it applies to your life: (<http://www.thewayback.net/articles/godshiddentreasures.htm>) God's Hidden Treasures

Keep writing! You've only just begun.
Diane

Re:, on: 2006/2/7 9:36

Hi Diane

You can read parts one and two right here in "Lounge." Yes, I wrote all the poems, actually the Lord inspired them so He gets the credit:) I do have an old website with a lot of my poetry on it. The link is <http://hometown.aol.com/appolus/index.html>

In the beauty of Holiness.....Frank

Re:, on: 2006/2/7 21:27

I appreciate your encouragement Gary.....Frank

Re: Praise God Frank. :), on: 2006/2/7 22:20

Hey, here it is. I was waiting, as I said, quite patiently for Part 3. :-)

Halleluia, Thank you Frank... I knew it was going to be worth the wait.

I knew you wouldn't keep us waiting in vain.

Thank you and I will keep it with the others.

Very Blessed and Glorifying to God.
Thank you Frank.

General Topics :: From the Slums of Scotland to the Glory of Calvary (Part Three)

Courage and Strength to you & yours.
Love.
Annie

Re:, on: 2006/2/8 12:54

Than you for your kind words of encouragment Annie. I appreciate them. In the beauty of Holiness.....Frank