

The INTERCESSOR

Presenting every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

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The Way To Abide

by Norman Grubb

We are admonished in the New Testament to walk as Jesus walked; yet most Christians are painfully aware that they fail, especially in day-to-day living. This article, reprinted from The Liberating Secret, presents the Biblical solution to this seeming impossibility: a victorious life, based not on a one-time experience, but a "moment by moment walk based on a moment by moment cleansing."

Faced with life as a daily combat with temptation, and the need of daily conquest, it is not surprising that so much space is given in the New Testament letters to our daily walk. Almost every letter mentions it. The writer usually progresses from some exposition of our standing in Christ to detailed instructions concerning the daily walk.

In Romans, for instance, the walk is not mentioned till chapter 8, where we are warned to "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." In Galatians, after the fundamental doctrine of justification has been magnificently reaffirmed and vindicated, Paul adds, "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit....If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."

Ephesians takes us to the summit of revelation in union with our ascended Lord, and then says: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of

the vocation wherewith ye are called....Walk in love....Walk as children of light....Walk circumspectly."

The Daily Walk

The walk is a picturesque metaphor for our daily Christian living. We have entered by the straight gate, now let us walk on the narrow way; and for this walk we know no better instructions than those given in 1 John 1. The great revelations of God's grace are usually summed up in some special passage of Scripture. We turn to John 3 to explain the new birth; Romans 6 for identification with Christ; 1 Cor. 13 for love; Heb. 1 for faith; 1 Thes. 4 for the Lord's coming; and for the daily walk of victory to 1 John 1.

The whole emphasis of this letter of John's is significant. He had seen Eternal Life walking this earth, and records that fact for us. We are now to live that same life, if we say He is in us. It is a call to the highest standard of Christian living, four times over described to us, as walking as He walked, being righteous as He is righteous, pure as He is pure, perfect in love, for "as He is, so are we in this world."

But who is sufficient for such things? The answer is first in the union relationship of us in Him and He in us, which John takes for granted in this

letter. But then it is in the daily abiding, the daily walk which he expounds to us in his first chapter by a fifth comparison. We are to walk in the light, as He is in the light. If we do this (and he tells us how to do it), and while we do it, these impossible standards are being reached; for he says, "Whoso is keeping His word, in him verily is the love of God being perfected." Not, mark you, some standard of perfection which can be claimed as ours once for all as a result of some specific experience, but the product of a moment by moment walk based on a moment by moment cleansing.

This present-tense eternal life,

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John explains, is a two-way fellowship, with God and with each other (1:3). A vertical and horizontal relationship we might call it. The vertical is the fellowship “with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ”; the horizontal we will look at later on.

Living fellowship, he then says, always brings fullness of joy (1:4). Where hearts are free and open, when

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there is nothing between Him and ourselves, we testify with David, “My cup runneth over.” A heart at rest, a sense of His presence, the joy which overflows, is the evidence that the fellowship is undimmed. An unbroken walk with Jesus, therefore, means a cup continuously running over. This is most important.

Sin Detected

It is the red or green light in the daily walk. When the inner life is

choked, when the heart is heavy, disturbed, hardened, the red light is showing. Something has come in between. How often that happens!

Just here is the danger. It is at this spot that we so easily slip into dishonesty, hypocrisy. What can stop that cup running over except sin? What is that inner flow of peace and freedom and joy but the Spirit witnessing to the presence of Jesus in our hearts? Nothing can stop Him bearing that witness, except sin. Our physical condition, circumstances, other people, can never stop Him. Only sin in the heart. But the trouble is that, through the subtlest of all hidden sins, the sin of pride and self-righteousness, I don't want to admit that I, a believer, have slipped into sin. So I call it by another name. It is my nerves; I was born like that; it is my physical condition, my tiredness; it is the pressure of home and business life; it is my difficult relatives and neighbours—but not sin!

John, however, closes the door to such dishonesty in simple fashion, if we will walk in it. Note particularly, he says, the character of the One with whom we walk in fellowship (1:5); it is the very heart of my message to you: God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If John had said “God is love,” we could have understood it. He does say that later on, but that does not come first. The revelation of God as light precedes that of God as love. Meet Him as light, then we meet Him as love. That is the eternal order.

God is light. What does that mean? Eph. 5:13 tells us, “Whatsoever doth make manifest is light.” When light shines into a darkened room, its one function is to make plain what is in that

room, and its one demand of us is that we respond honestly to it. In a darkened room we can call anything anything. When the light is turned on, we can by no means call a table a piano! We must call it what it is. In other words, all that God has ever required of a human being, whether saved or unsaved, is honesty. It is all we can contribute to our own salvation. We cannot remove our guilt or change a habit. But we can discern good from evil, and we can admit the truth about ourselves, as we are brought to see it.

Conviction by the Spirit

So when Jesus talks of the new birth with Nicodemus and shows him how it can be obtained, he adds one warning. There is a condemnation, He says, that condemnation is not the fact of sin, because full atonement has been made, not for our sins only, “but for the sins of the whole world.” But the condemnation is (John 3:19) “that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light...and hate the light, neither come to the light.”

Dishonesty, not sin, damns a soul. It is unwillingness to part with sin and therefore refusal to admit ourselves to be what God shows us we are by His word, by preaching, by the Spirit that sends us to hell. This is true, as we have already pointed out, for the power and horror of sin is that we *love* it and hate that which would turn us from it.

But just as the sinner can refuse to come to the light, so we who have come may refuse to walk in the light (1 John 1:6, 7). We may easily try to deceive ourselves and others. We may say we have fellowship with Him, but

really walk in darkness, and refuse to admit what light is showing us to be sin. We may say we have no sin or have not sinned (1:8, 10). But one thing we shall certainly learn, the blood of Jesus does not cleanse excuses. It cleanses, but only sin admitted to be sin, for it was shed for that purpose alone.

Note, however, that conviction of sin does not come from the inward, but the upward look. Sin is not seen to be sin by self-examination, but by the light of God. Conviction and repentance are gifts of God as much as salvation is (Acts 5:31). There is a world

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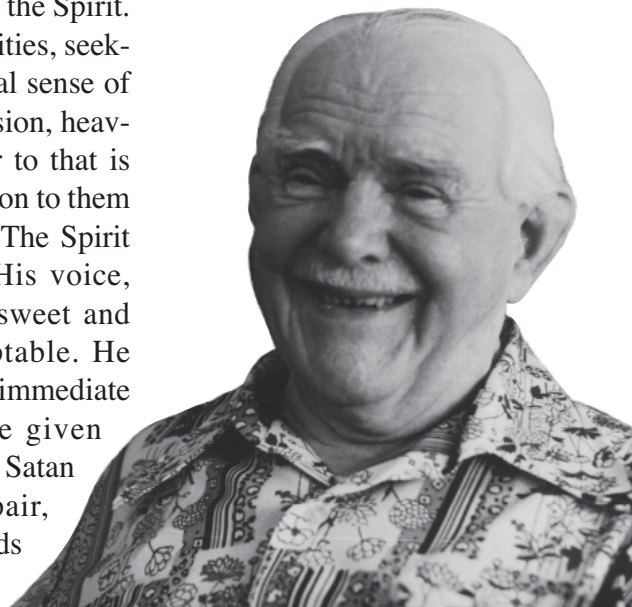
of difference between the nagging, corroding condemnations of the devil, and the clear convictions of the Spirit. The devil speaks in generalities, seeking to smear us by a general sense of failure, uncleanness, confusion, heaviness of spirit. The answer to that is there is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. The Spirit speaks specifically, and His voice, although rebuking us, is sweet and clean and true and acceptable. He points out some exact and immediate action by which we have given temporary entrance to sin. Satan points downward to despair, but the Spirit points upwards to cleansing.

So the detection of sin in our daily lives is no difficulty. If the cups do not run over, the red light is on. There is sin somewhere. But the One with whom we walk is light. Look honestly and frankly to Him, and it won't take Him long to clarify for us the point where we have sinned.

Confession, Contrition and Cleansing

Now comes the crucial moment. Having seen the light, will we walk in it? Walking is not standing still! It is progressing. Will we now walk forward, take the next step, and admit the truth about ourselves? That is what John calls confessing (1:9), which is the same word in the original as “saying,” but with the preposition “con” attached—saying with. Saying not what I think, but what the other person thinks: saying the same as God. Such confessing, of course, implies shame and contrition for the sin.

If we do that, we are walking in the light and, says John, immediately another fact of permanent validity comes into automatic operation: “the



blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1:7). That is a fact for all time since Calvary. The blood is always cleansing. But we only see and realize our title to the glorious fact when we are fulfilling the condition of walking in the light, as He is in the light. That means the specific confession of specific sins. We are then told in an equally specific way that "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The light that first shone on the sin is also shining on the blood. While we are walking with Him in the light with nothing known between, the blood is automatically cleansing unrecognized sin. Where known sin intervenes, there is this simple way of confession and cleansing.

Sometimes we may wonder just what is the meaning of that phrase, "the cleansing blood." Why is the blood called precious? And why is it the glory of the saints through eternity? Moses had the priceless privilege of being the first in human history to reveal the blood to the world. To him was given the wonderful symbolic sacrifice of the Passover, with its constantly quoted word, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." He gave Israel all the details of the sacrifices, according to the pattern shown him in the mount, and culminating in that great revelation of Lev. 17, "for the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." Perhaps the greatest contribution Moses made for the blessing of the world was not the deliverance of Israel, nor

the mighty exploits of faith, but the revelation of the centrality of the precious blood.

The completed revelation of the meaning of the blood, given us in the New Testament, is found in Heb. 9. The life is in the blood, therefore the shedding of the blood means the pouring out of the life. It is the public evidence of the completed sacrifice (9:22). Thus whenever the blood of Christ is mentioned as the ground of our salvation and cleansing, the meaning is that the shedding of that blood in public two thousand years

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ago was conclusive evidence that He paid the full price for the remission of sins. To make the evidence unmistakable is the reason why John so stressed that he saw the blood and water come from His side, and "bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe"; and says again that "there are three that bear witness on earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood."

The sacrifice once made, completed and witnessed, is our solid ground and title for having no more consciousness of sins. This is the cleansing in the blood, and this is

what it means when we say a thing is "under the blood." For this reason we glory in the blood, and count it supremely precious. Our consciences, defiled and guilty through conviction of some sin committed, are freed and cleansed as we see with the eye of faith that blood shed on Calvary, and its silent message to us over the years that full atonement was made by the outpoured life of our Saviour. "How much more shall the blood of Christ...cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God."

So now in our daily walk with Jesus, we have come full circle. Undisturbed fellowship means the cup running over. When it doesn't run over, it means that there is sin in our hearts. God, who is light, is revealing to us what that sin is. Recognizing that sin, we confess it and repent of it. Where there is confession, there is also the revelation of the cleansing blood, the token of the completed remission. And where the blood is applied by faith, the Spirit always bears witness. The fellowship is restored, and the cup again runs over.

Fellowship Among Men

This daily walk in the Spirit is not merely a matter of continuous fellowship with God. It is also with one another. To abide in Christ is to be at one with the body as well as the Head. There is the horizontal relationship, as we saw, as well as the vertical. Indeed, the former is the acid test of the reality of the latter.

John makes that plain when he says that our righteousness among men is the proof of our righteousness before God (3:7); and our love for

our brother of our love toward God (4:20); and our testimony before men of our faith in God (4:15). In every case the visible horizontal is the practical demonstration of the unseen vertical.

So John says, "If we walk in the light...we have fellowship one with another." Now we have seen that this walk demands quick recognition of sin, followed by confession and cleansing. But this also means that when the sin has affected a brother, the confession must include him. That is really obvious, and we but mention it in passing. A repentance before God which said, "To You I confess, but not to my brother" needs no comment on its unreality.

True Repentance

David called repentance "brokenness." That leaves no place for establishing my own righteousness. Down I go before God, and before man where necessary. A bent tree can spring into place again, a broken one cannot. That is repentance. This is no light challenge to face, for so many sins I commit affect my neighbour: an untruth, irritability, harsh criticism, stress and strain, an unquiet spirit, even the heaviness of unbelief, affect home, church or business. I must be ready to confess, and under God's guidance will often do so. Yet confession to man should be under His guidance. Satan can whip God's saints and drive them from behind to unwise action, whereas the Spirit gently leads and goes before. There are times when confession can do more harm than good. There are earnest folks who embarrass by their constant references to their failures. I must be

truly willing. That is the point. The rest we can leave to God.

But fellowship in the light includes more than confession to a brother. It includes testimony one to the other. Confessing with the mouth the Lord Jesus, as Paul commands us to do. The emphasis then is not so much on the thing that needed cleansing in our daily walk, although that has to be mentioned, as in the cleansing received and the joy that followed. This is almost an atrophied limb in our church life, with a consequent limp in our fellowship. In early

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Methodism the weekly class meeting was used for this purpose as the most vital method of keeping the congregations walking close to the Lord and to one another. Each member was required to tell of his week's progress, sins, temptations, and victories. There are those in various parts of the world today who maintain this form of open fellowship, and prove how richly the Spirit seals it.

To confess with the mouth is a principle of living faith, and it is meant to be the natural habit of the believer to tell of the Lord's daily

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this magazine is to further the great high calling of the Lord Jesus to carry His Gospel to the whole world. This calling is known in the Christian world as the Great Commission. Our interpretation of the Gospel is that Jesus Christ is the second member of the Trinity, fully God, made manifest in the flesh. He was tempted in all points as we are, but totally without sin. He was crucified for the sins of the world, was buried, and rose from the dead on the third day, according to the Scriptures. He gives the power to become the sons of God to all who receive Him.

Beyond this forgiveness of sins, *The Intercessor* is committed to proclaiming to every creature the mystery of the Gospel, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory (Col. 1:27). The outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Church at Pentecost means that Christ has joined Himself to us as one spirit (1 Cor. 6:17). Thus we see that Christ has reproduced Himself in our flesh, and we Christians are really Christ living as us (Gal. 2:20).

Therefore, there is not only the forgiveness of sins but also a life in Christ of knowing we are dead to sin (Rom. 6). Furthermore, we are dead to the Law (Rom. 7), since the power of sin is through the Law. Christ is the only Lawkeeper (Rom. 8), and there is no independent human nature that can keep the Law, though we are continually tempted to believe so.

Belief in an independent human nature is Satan's lie and the root of sin. Non-Christians are really Satan-indwelt, expressing his lusts (John 8:44), just as we have come to learn that Christians are Christ-indwelt, expressing His righteousness (2 Cor. 6:16). Humans have no moral nature of their own, meaning that we are simply expressions of the indwelling deity nature, either of Christ or Satan (the fallen created being who is the spirit of error). Sin in a Christian is a result of believing again Satan's lie that there is a human nature which can do good or evil.

Our full restoration, then, is to see ourselves as Christ in the world and to labor and travail to see Christ formed in others according to the mighty working of the Spirit. This is "intercession," the definite laying down of our lives to present every man perfect in Christ (Col. 1:28). *The Intercessor* is committed to this great and thrilling commission, the cost of bringing it about, and the resurrection joy of reaping the harvest!

dealings with him, both in fellowship meetings and in the normal contacts of life. Confession to those against whom we sin is an obligation: testimony is a continual privilege. Some of its important effects are worth noting.

It always magnifies Christ and gives glory to the precious blood, when we tell of its power in our lives, and give the homely details. At fellowship meetings of this kind there is a constant stream of praise ascending to the Throne, as one after another tells of up-to-date experience. But it needs to be down-to-earth testimony with the practical details both of the failure and victory. Vague generalities have little life in them.

Bringing into the light the Lord's dealing with me over a particular sin sensitizes me to that sin, and indeed to sin in general, as nothing else can. It is the fulfilment of the law of faith that, when we confess a thing with our mouth, it stands before us in its stark reality: we see it in clear outline as never before.

Those who have begun to learn this way of open fellowship find they become sin-sensitive and thus can quickly be cleansed. They discover why they were so often in bondage and heaviness of spirit for no apparent reason. Sin always binds and usually blinds. Formerly when we sinned, we often did not recognize it was a sin, yet it bound us. "Whoever commits a sin is a slave to that sin" (John 8:34). Now by a quicker recognition, there is a quicker appropriation of the blood and a quicker deliverance. That is a direct result of learning to walk in the light with one's brethren.

Honesty and Openness

Walking in the light helps me to keep free and honest. All too easily I slip into unreality, appearing before others better than I really am. I become a partial hypocrite. Jesus gave special warning against that subtle leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy, adding that most striking summons to openness, "For there is nothing covered which shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be made known." It is all coming out one day. Better the small blush now, than the big blush later on! Better the burn-

One of the devil's commonest lies to us is that I am the only person who would do or think such a thing. If my brethren knew, wouldn't they be horrified! And I am shut up in a prison of secret shame, and maybe struggle against some temptation which I imagine assaults no one as it does me.

ings of a purging humiliation now, than to have all burned up that day!

Then, only true openness brings heart into true unison with heart. When barriers are really down, and fellowship has gone below the surface to where we are living our daily lives and meeting our daily temptations, there is a sense of brotherhood and understanding nothing else can give. Such fellowship in the light, costly though it is, gives us all a new understanding of one easily missed truth—that He fashioned our hearts alike, and that we are all men of like passions. One of the devil's commonest

lies to us is that I am the only person who would do or think such a thing. If my brethren knew, wouldn't they be horrified! And I am shut up in a prison of secret shame, and maybe struggle against some temptation which I imagine assaults no one as it does me. But when we walk in the light, how different we find it to be! We are all alike. There is level ground at the foot of the cross. Like temptations come to all of us, and we all need the same cleansing blood. Here we find unity indeed. Not in some artificial attempt to claim some special standard of spirituality, but as fellow sinners all rejoicing daily in the same Saviour.

In this lies the humanity of the Bible biographies. We can understand these men because they were like us. It was actually said of both Elijah and Paul that they were men "subject to like passions as we are." We know all the intimate failures of these men. How Sarah persuaded Abram to take Hagar; how Moses disobeyed God; how Jonah ran away; what the still small voice said to Elijah when he had fled from Jezebel; and even what Satan said to Christ on the mount of temptation. How do we know these things? The answer is obvious. Those who experienced them must have told them. The walls were down in those days!

The Mote and the Beam

Then again, one of the weakest links in the believer's witness is disunity. Christ foresaw that when He made it one of His last two commands that we should love one another, and when it was the chief petition of His last prayer. In families, between hus-

band and wife, parents and children, in congregations between individual believers, and between sections of the assembly, we all know our constant failures. Walking in the light is the solution for this. Disunity manifests itself in me by a hardness in my heart towards a brother. I may feel I am justified, and I may really be so: I may have strong and rightful differences of opinion: I may have dislikes founded on mannerisms, on personality quirks, or on more serious manifestations of the flesh. But my hardness is sin, when I am told to have perfect love, to love as He loved me. The only primary solution to such constantly arising fellowship problems is for me to walk in the light. When I learn to face my hardness as sin and, if so led, to admit it to my brother, I am paving the way to a meeting place at Calvary.

Whenever I see faults in my brother as something bigger than the fact of Christ in him, I am sinning. When my eye is single, it is full of light. In looking on my brother, my eye is single, when I am seeing Christ in him, and only then. In God's sight that is all He sees, for "by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." My eye is evil when it is so fixed on faults and failings in my brother that they obscure my clear sight of Christ in him. And how easy it is to do that! It is the beam in my eye which hinders me from taking out the mote from my brother's eye. Motes are there (as also in me), but they are fiddling compared to my sin in making more of them than Christ in him. He is the apple of Christ's eye! Let me therefore get my sin out of the way, by confession and

cleansing, and if led, by confession to my brother. Then let me renew my faith in the One within him who is busy conforming Him to His perfect image. That is perfect love. It is not blindness concerning those motes, but it is clear-sighted faith and love. It surrounds the brother with love, and contributes a living faith to the fact of a transforming work of the Spirit going on in him. That is the difference between criticism and discernment. Criticism sees the flesh or devil in a brother. It tears down and condemns. It has self-superiority at its roots. Discernment sees Christ in a brother. It edifies. It combines loving appreci-

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ation of the present with hope for the future. If I do that, I am fulfilling the love commandment, so far as in me lies, and demonstrating the unity of the Spirit.

Such are some reasons for the horizontal walk in the light, as well as the vertical. We are not under the law. We are not bound or commanded at set occasions to bear testimony one to another, or in our gatherings. We are led by the Spirit, and He will show the right occasions and right things to say. There may be times for restraint or silence: times when such a testimony might merely be misunderstood or hurt the hearers: some things that might be unseemly or embarrassing. But if there is a ready heart, under-

standing and accepting both our privilege and duty to walk in the light with our brethren, God will guide aright.

One of the hindrances to such ready testimony is sometimes the deep-down sense that we ought not to be the kind of people that are tripped up and have to admit the need of cleansing in this or that. But the fact is that we are. The flesh is weak, and we walk in it, though not of it; and often even our sense of shame is really pride, and our condemnation is that *we* have failed. We will do well to get this constant fresh sight of our nothingness, even though born of His Spirit, and to recognize how quickly we are caught out by flesh and devil. Then our testimony will have more in it of a glorying in His grace than of confusion at our fall.

Exhortation

One other aspect of fellowship in the light is mutual exhortation. Twice over in the letter to the Hebrews we are told to "exhort one another," with particular reference to the danger of unrecognized backsliding. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily...lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." And when we are told not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, it is again "to exhort one another; and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." We are to help each other to the highest. But we at once recognize the dangers and difficulties of such reciprocal challenging. On the one hand we could do it in a wrong spirit, as a form of retaliation, to put a person right, to give

them what we think they deserve. We can be certain that no one is in a position to challenge another on something in their lives or attitudes, who is not equally ready to receive a challenge themselves. Only those who readily and continually “break” and admit their own sins, are in a place to point out those of others.

On the other hand, it is truly costly to be faithful to a brother. It is much more comfortable to pass things

by, say nothing, and thus not risk disturbing the peace. A challenge may not always be accepted in the spirit in which it is intended. It is costly to give, costly to receive.

-The Liberating Secret

For many years after his retirement as General Secretary of the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade, Norman Grubb traveled extensively sharing the truth of our union with Christ. He

also carried on a huge personal correspondence with individuals throughout the world. He was the author of many books and pamphlets, a number of which are available through the Zerubbabel Book Ministry. Norman lived with his daughter, Priscilla, in Fort Washington, PA. Norman P. Grubb entered the Kingdom at 98 years of age.

Editor's Note

This issue focuses on the place of confession and repentance from sin in our Total Truth understanding. The lead article, “The Way to Abide,” focuses on walking in unbroken fellowship with God and man in the light of our daily temptations and trials. “If we say He is in us...it is a call to the highest standard of living,” writes Norman Grubb. What follows is a Biblical primer in the foundational elements of repentance: recognizing the entrance of sin into our lives, the importance of honesty in confessing sin, placing faith in the cleansing Blood, and the restoration of fellowship.

“Conviction, Confession, Cleansing,” from Norman’s booklet *Continuous Revival*, goes right to the heart of the issue, reminding us that sin is against God, not merely a wrong against a brother; God reveals it to us, shining light on both the specific sin and the cleansing Blood. We need not live a life of “morbid self-examination,” but when God exposes sin, we must honestly confess (that is, agree with God). “With Bended Knee and a Broken Heart,” is a meaty Biblical examination of

how we can stop the seemingly inevitable cycle of sinning and asking God’s forgiveness and, instead, recognize that there is a new spirit operating us—with emphasis on the necessity of brokenness and true repentance.

The brief article, “False Condemnation,” reveals Satan’s counterfeit for true Spirit-conviction of sin and the subtle trap of self-effort (an impossibility of course) for those who do not understand the implications of our new life in Christ. “It Remains Tough” deals with God’s purpose in various trials and temptations in our lives, with an excellent section on how to discern between temptation and sin. Going one step further, “Quick Down, Quick Up,” squarely addresses a worry of most honest Christians—facing and dealing with recurring sins.

“The Necessity of Self-Exposure” uses examples from the lives of Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph, to show how God must take “every forward-moving soul through a drastic process of self-exposure.” Similarly, “The Crisis Experience” includes incidents through which Moses, Joshua and Elisha faced the necessary crisis that pierced to the root of self-reliance and which established them in a fixed “consciousness of inner permanent unity” in Christ.

This issue includes several personal testimonies that clearly illustrate the only way to be liberated from the bondage of sin to the freedom found in Christ. In “My Spiritual Waterloo” Norman reveals how, as a well-churched youth from a Christian home, he was cornered by the question, “Do you belong to Christ?” Honesty opened the door to facing his selfishness, his sinfulness before God, and his need for a Savior. Dacia Trethewey’s article, “The Prodigal,” is an illuminating narrative of how she became ensnared in sin for two years but, with the help of her Christian family, found release and restored fellowship through repentance, confession and faith. Finally, we have included the brief testimonies of two teens who followed the same Biblical way of release from slavery to sin/Satan to total freedom in Christ.

Two feature articles bring us full circle to the life available when abiding in Christ: fellowship with God and man. Meryl Langley’s “Unexpected Visitors” and Carol Hoffmann’s “The Joy of Hosting a Zerubbabel Get-Together” include several elements intrinsic to true fellowship: assembling together (planned and unplanned), sharing and instruction in the Word, and mutual exhortation and encouragement.

The Crisis Experience

by Norman Grubb

It is one thing to know truth by being taught it, by seeing it in the Bible, or by mental grasp of it. That is a right start and we do not despise it; but the reason we stress the second crisis, call it by what name we like, is that being inner people, life is lived spontaneously and naturally only by a fixed inner consciousness. We are in outer life what we inwardly know we are. In our former life, before we were Christ's, we had a consciousness, though maybe a vague one, just of being ourselves, and so we lived on our self-level. Then after we had knowingly become children of God by the witness of the Spirit, we had a new fixed inner consciousness: we were now forgiven, loved, accepted, inheritors of eternal life, we were in living relationship with Jesus and the Father; and without any special effort this had its radical effects on our daily attitudes and actions.

But this was still a gap-consciousness. Here we were, and here was Christ with us or even known as in us.

But that is something different from a full and final union-consciousness that we are He in our human forms: not we living, but He living our lives, as Paul said; and Jesus even said that we are the light of the world, not having the light, but being the light. How could this be on any other basis than an inner unity, for He is the light, we the negative non-light? Yet here He is saying we are the light! Now this is the third level of consciousness, inwardly imparted as a fixed certainty, whether accompanied by outer signs or not, and given many names to label it, a

consciousness of inner permanent unity as fact, never again seeking Him as if apart from us, the experienced unity-relationship of branch and Vine, body and Head. And when there is the inner consciousness, then we are just this. All we ever have to do is recognize it and act on the glorious fact; and because it is our fixed consciousness, it has spontaneous outcome in our daily lives.

Inner Disturbance

For this reason we stress this crisis experience, because, both in Bible and post-Bible records, most of us do not settle into a given consciousness and new power in life until by some specific means, and usually a dated moment, we know that this is so. We see the same in what we call our "conversion experience." The Bible never says you must be able to point to a given date; but you must be able to say it is a given fact! Paul had a dramatic Damascus road conversion. When we do not know inner truth we may think such an outer experience is necessary.

I thought so in early years. "If Jesus would appear to me like that, then I could believe Him," I would say. But of course it was not the shining of an outward light which blinded Paul, those with him saw no light and lost no sight; it was the inner illumination in his spirit which was his conversion. And I talk with those who cannot give a date or dramatic account of meeting with Jesus, and they get disturbed and begin to question about themselves when they hear the stories of these sudden conversions.

Such disturbance is good; for we must know either by a reaffirmation of a former saving faith or by a new act of believing. All that matters is my ability to say with Paul, "I know whom I have believed" and with the blind man, "whereas I was blind, now I see." The fact is essential, the date a detail.

As with the new birth, so with the union relationship, there is a meeting with God by the Spirit, for most of us in a crisis experience, which permanently affects our inner consciousness; and we move out into a spontaneous life of liberty, authority and fruitfulness. How this takes place we want to examine more thoroughly, as well as its outcomes; but first we shall look a bit more closely at some of the men of the Bible to whom this happened. We can only glance at those great moments, sometimes with a little that preceded it and sometimes with a little of the aftermath, where we wish we could give more detail.

A Different Dimension

It was only after some years of walking with God in a faith life, that Abraham had that meeting with God over the birth of a son in the impossible, which finally fixed him in faith on a permanent basis; and Abraham was at ease, not only in the "miraculous" birth of Isaac, but years later in his faith for a physical resurrection when told by God to kill his son. Abraham walked those years in a different dimension.

Jacob at Jabbok was named a prince with God, which was the meaning of his

new name Israel. From that night on he knew he was God's royal son with God's resources at his free disposal. He was no longer a fearful and persistent suppliant for God's favours. He was now the established patriarch. When young Joseph appeared like a foolish young megalomaniac with his boastful dreams, his father could see through and "observed the saying"; and when introduced to Pharaoh, the world's greatest potentate, though a homeless immigrant dependent on Pharaoh's beneficence, "Jacob blessed Pharaoh," and "without contradiction the less is blessed of the better."

Moses we all know at that burning bush. But see the difference. Before, a beggared exile, stripped of all those human resources of the royal household which had caused Stephen to record that he had been "mighty in word and deed," a fugitive for forty years from the Pharaoh he was supposed to have forced to release the Israelites: now, suddenly, surely a crisis moment, he inwardly saw something (for no mere outer eyes would have seen this desert bush which burned and yet was not consumed). He 'saw' that God is no distant watcher over human affairs, but is Himself the doer by His human agents. God was that fire whose fuel was the common desert bush, and Moses was such a bush! And that meant God in such realized union with His human agent, that He directly told Moses he was both a god to Aaron and a god to Pharaoh, and could act as such; and there followed the plagues that broke the power of Pharaoh, and the opening of the Red Sea, the water from the rock, the daily manna, the face to face communings with God on the fiery mount which was death for the people to touch (who still knew only a God at a dis-

tance); and Moses was called God's friend, and his face shone with a light which made it necessary for him to wear a veil. This was the man at the bush.

The Move to God-Sufficiency

Look at two more, Joshua had a near shave (as we all do!). He had some warning lessons on the dangers of his special form of self-sufficiency as an able general. It was not his military skill, but Moses' raised hands of faith which defeated the Amalekites. As he descended the mount with Moses and they heard the revellings of apostate Israel round the golden calf, Joshua's proud military mind interpreted them as the noise of battle where his prowess would be needed, whereas Moses knew them for what they were, the lewd songs of the idolaters. While the people remained in the camp under judgement, Moses, who knew well enough the failure they had been, mingled daily with them, but Joshua hid himself away in the tabernacle, "holier than thou": and when Moses summoned the elders to meet with him, the Spirit fell on them, but also on two elders who had not obeyed the summons but remained in the camp, Joshua was indignant for Moses' authority, and thus by implication for himself, and called on Moses to rebuke them. Moses' simple, selfless answer was, "Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His Spirit on them!"

But then the moment of truth came to Joshua, the cornering we all have, to bring us to our final awakening. Joshua was among the twelve spies who returned from their visit to the promised land with a report on its natural abundance and bringing the grapes of Eschol;

but who also brought their terrified and unbelieving account of the giants who made them feel like grasshoppers, and the cities exaggeratedly said to be "walled up to heaven," in the usual way belief in evil always exaggerates. Only Caleb of that twelve rejected their report and alone spoke that great word of faith, "Let us go up at once and possess it, for we are well able to overcome it, and as for the giants, they are bread for us." But Joshua, for the last disastrous time controlled by his human military judgement, had sided with the eleven.

That night was his "second crisis." Next morning, when the people were so frenzied with fear that they talked of stoning Moses and Aaron and electing a leader to take them back to Egypt, it was not only Caleb, but now Joshua with him who aligned themselves with Moses. Joshua that night had "died and risen with Christ," as we would say. He entered into that same union relationship with God as Moses at the burning bush, for a few years later when God was taking Moses to Himself, He said to Moses, "Take thee Joshua, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay thine hand upon him." And Joshua could, in greatest calmness speak those words of authority which opened the Jordan, brought down the walls of Jericho, stopped the sun for a day, and settled Israel into the promised land.

Authority With God

It took Elisha eight years, after his total initial commitment to God by giving up his prosperous farm to follow Elijah, to discover that commitment is not the same as having authority with God. Evidently Elijah had a secret hidden from Elisha; for he could talk about standing in the presence of God and

telling Ahab there would be no dew or rain until he himself, not God, said so: and he could call down fire at a given moment after a day of taunting the priests of Baal. What kind of man was this? And now the Training School students were maliciously warning Elisha that his leader was about to leave them as he said he would, and Elisha was his successor. So what?

Elisha was cornered. He had to get through; and do any of us get through till we have to? And he did, for again he "saw" as only the prepared do see. "If you see me when I am taken from you," Elijah said to him, "That will be the moment when you see what I have seen

all these years." So Elisha stuck by Elijah and would not leave him, and saw him taken up in a whirlwind; but as he did so, he saw way beyond a man being raptured, he saw the One with whom Elijah had been at home those years, "the Lord of hosts," the One with the endless resources. So Elisha found the secret and was at ease in it. He could raise a sunken axe-head and make it swim, he could cross a river, raise a dead young man, purify poisoned food. The plainest evidence was when Elisha had been giving away the secret plans of Israel's enemy Benhadad king of Syria, and the king sent his army by night to surround the small city of Dothan where Elisha was.

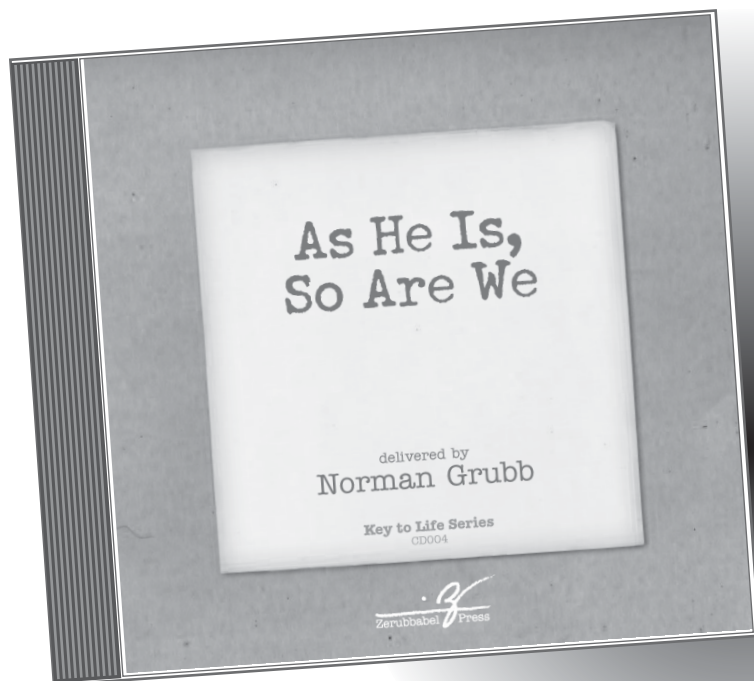
In the morning, his servant was terrified. There was no way of escape. "Alas, master, what shall we do?"

"Don't look outwardly at man," Elisha said in effect. "Lord, open the young man's eyes that he may see," and he saw "the mountains filled with horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha"—the Lord of hosts with whom Elisha was now at home.

To these we only have to add the two mountaintop experiences of the New Testament: Jesus before and after His baptism and the coming of the dove, and the disciples before and after Pentecost. We all know the difference.

—Who Am I?

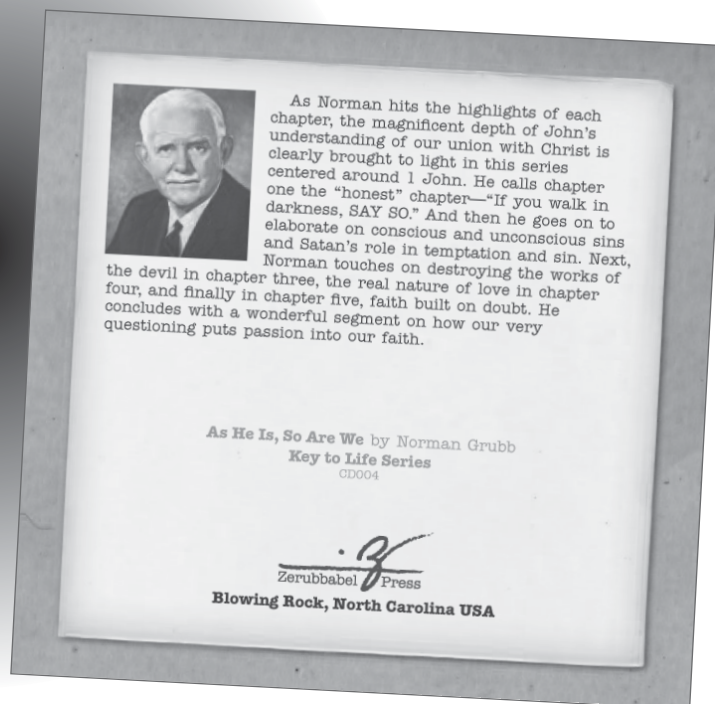
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BIBLE STUDY:

by Brett Burrowes

At some point in our lives, probably many times, we have had to come face to face with what we truly are on the inside, with what God has already told us about ourselves in the Scriptures. After all, God is a God of truth and is faithful to show the truth to his people. The fact is that we are rotten to the core. As the apostle Paul has written: "There is no one who is righteous, not even one; there is no one who has understanding, there is no one who seeks God. All have turned aside, together they have become worthless; there is no one who shows kindness, there is not even one. Their throats are opened graves; they use their tongues to deceive. The venom of vipers is under their lips. Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery are in their paths, and the way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes"; (Rom. 3:10-18).

Of course, when we received Christ as our Savior, we admitted that we were sinners, but probably few of us realized how deep sin ran in our lives and how completely Satan had run our lives for so long. And although Christ came into our hearts as soon as we received him, Satan continued and perhaps even continues to run our lives from the outside.

In Psalm 51, David is praying for God's forgiveness for the sins of adultery and murder. Perhaps we have never committed sins like these, but what David says applies to all of us, for all sin is really an expression of Satan's spirit of self-for-self. He who sins is of the devil, according to 1 John 3:8. So there are really no better or worse sins, though perhaps some sins have worse consequences for ourselves and others. The question that concerns us here is how we can get a new spirit operat-

ing us and stop the seemingly inevitable cycle of sinning and asking God's forgiveness, and I believe that David provides us with an answer.

But let us first start with what the wrong answer is: it is not a matter of endlessly repeating to ourselves that Christ is living His life through us or saying that who we truly are is Christ in our forms as if it were some magical mantra that will make us different. Christ living in and as us is not a label we slap over our sinful lives—that

More than anything else, we must be rigorously honest with ourselves, about what we have done, why we have done it, and what we have gotten for ourselves in doing it. We must call what we have done sins and not mere mistakes or lapses. We must allow God to strip away all our excuses and self-defenses.

would just be another form of self-deception. In fact this is the first thing we can learn from David: "You desire truth in our inner selves" (Psa 51:6). More than anything else, we must be rigorously honest with ourselves, about what we have done, why we have done it, and what we have gotten for ourselves in doing it.

We must call what we have done sins and not mere mistakes or lapses. We must allow God to strip away all our excuses and self-defenses. In the past we might have admitted we did

wrong, but have we truly faced it in all its ugliness and confessed it? Mere admission usually means that there is some kind of "but" attached to the end of the sentence: Yes I know I sinned but...it isn't that bad...but that person did something worse...but the other person deserved it...but if it weren't for...but if I only had the opportunity...but I really needed...but I just wasn't myself...You know all the excuses. We've all made them for ourselves and we don't like to think we are as bad as all that.

And if anyone dares to point out that we really are that bad, we whine and pout and complain that they are putting us in the worst possible light. The truth is we are that bad, and God demands rigorous honesty in facing the truth about ourselves—He desires truth in the inward parts.

And truth is really the one thing we can bring to the table. We can't change ourselves, we can't get for ourselves a new heart and a new spirit; we cannot even produce brokenness over our sins in ourselves. Those are all gifts from God. What God demands is the truth. So the point where the battle is joined with Satan is whether we are going to bend the knee and say what the unvarnished truth is. What is bending the knee? Bending the knee to God is simply acknowledging that He has the right to demand truth from us and then giving it to Him. We will either bend the knee in this life or in the next when every knee shall bow (Phil. 2:10), but by then it will be too late. What God desires from us is that we bend the knee willingly as his children, not as his enemies when Jesus returns.

It is not enough, however, to bend the knee to an invisible God up in heaven; we must bend the knee to God in

WITH BENDED KNEE AND A BROKEN HEART

our Christian brothers and sisters—only then can we know that we have truly bent the knee. We submit to one another out of reverence for Christ in them (Eph. 5:21), acknowledging that we are accountable to each other as forms of Christ. As James says, confess your sins to another that you may be healed (5:16). So we bend the knee by openly and honestly admitting to another human being what we have done, without making excuses or justifications for what we have done. As David says: “Against you and you alone have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment” (51:4).

When we confess our sin, we acknowledge God’s absolute right to judge us, that we are totally in the wrong no matter what mitigating circumstance we might come up with in our heads. We have an inner spirit knowing that we are wrong, since our sin, and not that of others, is always before us, and we can put up no defense for our actions and motives. It is a burning in our heart that we are just plain wrong.

If we put up any kind of defense that is just proof that we still think we are right after all and that there was a legitimate reason for disobeying God. But God never forgives excuses. It is possible for Satan to come along and to steal the Holy Spirit’s conviction of sin if we do not act on it right away and confess the sin. And as he steals that pinhole of light from us, he fills our minds with excuses and self-justifications and a willingness to fight whoever tries to convince us otherwise.

If we do not grab hold of the lifeline God offers us and see ourselves as He sees us, then Satan will do our seeing for us. But if we bend the knee

when God gives us a moment of truth, then God can produce in us the broken and contrite heart that he requires (Psa. 51:17).

What is a broken and contrite heart? Brokenness translates a word that refers to being defeated in battle by one’s enemies—it means that the fight has gone out of you, and you acknowledge that you have lost the battle. So brokenness means that the fight has gone out of us to defend ourselves and make excuses for ourselves and to blame others for the consequences of our actions. It means that we acknowledge that God is in the

It is not enough, however, to bend the knee to an invisible God up in heaven; we must bend the knee to God in our Christian brothers and sisters—only then can we know that we have truly bent the knee.

right and that we have disobeyed Him.

Most of all, however, it means that we are filled with a deep pain and sorrow over what we have done, and shame that we have done it. It is not a shame that “I” have done it, as in “how could I have done such a horrible thing” (thinking that normally I am such a good upright person that it is unbelievable that I could have done such a thing). No, it is shame that we did the deed at all, or failed to do the good that God was requiring of us.

Although we know that the truth is not in our soulular feelings, at the same time, brokenness is always accompanied by a deep pain and sor-

row over what we have done, and a shame for having done it. If not, then the brokenness is not genuine and rest assured, we will sin in that way again and again until we are broken.

A contrite heart is one that is humbled. Being humbled simply means facing the truth about ourselves and having an accurate picture of who we are. It is different from feeling humiliated, a feeling that others have mistreated us and portrayed as worse than we really are. But since we really are that bad, humiliation is really just a sign that we are still full of Satanic pride.

The only true humiliation is not one that we feel—it is allowing Satan to continue to run our lives when we know better. But when we humble ourselves and tell the truth about our sin, then we can no longer think that we are better than anyone else, or worse for that matter. There is level ground at the foot of the cross.

And so when we have truly bent the knee and our hearts are broken over what we have done, then God puts a new and right spirit within us (51:10). Of course, the Spirit of Christ has been dwelling in our hearts all along (Rom 8:9), but now because we are freed from the foothold Satan established in us because of our sin (Eph. 4:27), Christ is free to express Himself through us and as us. Then and only then are we free to say that it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me (Gal. 2:20). So this is God’s pattern: we bend the knee by honestly confessing our sin and taking direction from others as to how to get out of it, our heart becomes broken and contrite over what we have done, and in the process there is a change in the spirit who operates us and lives through us.

My Spiritual Waterloo

by Norman Grubb

The Easter Holidays of my 18th year were my spiritual waterloo. I had begun to question the reality of God and Christ. I was reading such books as John Stuart Mill's *Utilitarianism*. I had not lost my boyhood faith nor jettisoned it. But I was questioning. If I was self-ish, was not God also? Did it not say, "For Thy pleasure we are and were created"? and of Jesus that "For the joy set before Him, He endured the cross"? What difference between their self-interest and mine? Yet at the same time as I had my youthful intellectual questioning, I was battling with and had the guilt of my secret moral defeats.

There was a friend in Bournemouth—my father had by now moved to a church in Poole, near Bournemouth—who was a retired Royal Artillery major, an original, interesting fellow, named Major Gartside-Tippinge. He had a lovely home and grass tennis-court. He was also a very keen Christian and especially keen on getting boys to Christ. His wife was a sister of D. E. Hoste, the General Director of the China Inland Mission. He used to invite my brother Harold and me over to tennis, and then, if he could, catch us after in his drawing-room for a talk about our need of salvation, which we called having a "pi jaw." On one such visit, my brother escaped somehow, but I was caught in the drawing-room. All I remember Tippinge asking me was the pertinent question, Did I belong to Christ?

He had caught me, or rather the Spirit of God through him. If he had asked did I belong to the church of

which I was a member, that would have been easy. Wasn't I the son of a parson, baptized and confirmed in the Church of England? But when he asked me if I had a personal relationship to Christ, I was caught. How could I say I had a personal relationship with a Person whose existence I was doubting? I was embarrassed. With my public school code of hiding our feelings on such subjects as religion, I could lie my way out, say I did, and escape. I did not realize then that our eternal destiny hangs on our

I did not realize then that our eternal destiny hangs on our honesty; and as Jesus said, in John 3, when light comes to us we either hate it or respond to it, and are either saved or lost accordingly.

honesty; and as Jesus said, in John 3, when light comes to us we either hate it or respond to it, and are either saved or lost accordingly. Somehow I did manage to admit that I could not say He was personal to me. Tippinge got me on my knees, made me pray something, and I got up as I got down, and escaped.

But on my way home on the top of a tramcar, the implication of what I had said got its teeth into me. I knew the gospel, and that, if I could not say Christ was my personal Saviour, I was going to hell. And I knew too, through the guilt of my sins, that I deserved to go there.

At last this was real to me; so as soon as I reached my small bedroom at the top of the house, I got on my knees and for the first time in my life meant it when I asked, according to the Lord's prayer, for my sins to be forgiven.

Immediately there flashed into my mind what I had always been taught but it had meant nothing to me—that that was why Jesus died—to take away my sins. Then, with a strange new sense of joy and relief, I said, "If that is so, I don't have to go to hell, God is my Father, and heaven is my home." In succeeding years I may have dug deeper in order to understand in a more complete sense—at least for my own satisfaction—what those simply stated and believed facts really mean; but these were the simple gospel facts by which I, and millions of others, have "passed from death unto life," and "the Spirit had borne witness with my spirit" that I was a child of God.

The next thought that came into my mind, true again to our school traditions of downgrading emotion, was that this was just a momentary emotion, and tomorrow morning I would wake up thinking football, not Christ. But not so. My first waking thoughts were this new joy, and have been so now these fifty-four years! And two facts stand out to me—first, I am glad there are bold men who go out of their way to seek you out and ask if you are Christ's; and secondly, that I had had the background years of church and Bible teaching, boring though it was to me, because it had

stored my mind with the truths of the way of salvation, ready material for my heart's need when the moment came. And though this crisis moment stands out to me, and I suppose will do throughout eternity, I really know that it was the background life and love and example of my parents which had prepared the soil and sown the seed, so that I had never been without a sincere faith (even if temporarily shaken), said my prayers, read my Bible, and had moral restraints on me. So April 1914 was the turning-point of my life, and I was eighteen years of age.

I did not realize, as I do now, what had really happened to me, and what happens every time a person gets born from above. My hungry, ambitious, dissatisfied self had found a new centre—not itself. A love for Christ, and for the Father who had sent Him, had begun to supersede love for just myself. It was not really my love for Him, for I am only capable of self-love; it was, as Paul said, “the love of God” (not my love for God, but His own love) “shed abroad in

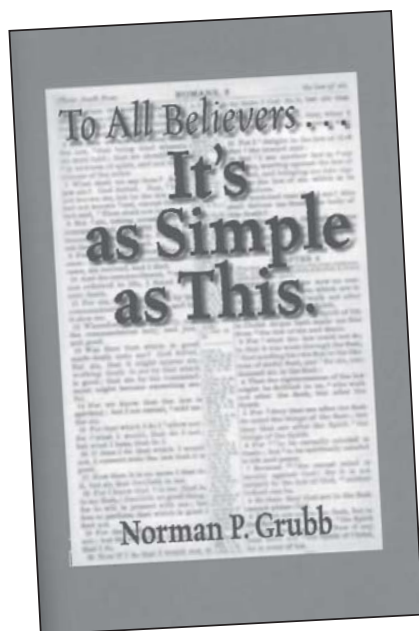
our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given to us” (Rom. 5:5). In other words, an inner unity had taken place, my human spirit with His Spirit, branch to Vine as Jesus said. I had “come home.” I had been one who had lost his way and had lived in the illusion (but real enough to us while we believe it, for we are what we believe) of being a separate little human seeking my own ends and fighting my own, usually losing, battles of life.

By coming home, like the prodigal to the father, I had found my restoration to the One Spirit of the universe, the Eternal Father through His Son; and that restoration is a union, spirit with Spirit (1 Cor. 6:17), by which I am an expression of Him in my human form; and despite my multiple deviations in my free and temptable humanity, the new spontaneous motivation of my human self is loving Him more than I love myself; and in loving Him, loving all. My self-love, instead now of finding its expression in seeking my own self-ends, begins to find a new meaning in

pleasing myself by pleasing Him and wanting others to know Him. In place of being basically a self-lover, I had begun to be a God- and other-lover; or should I say, I had begun to be the kind of self-lover God Himself is, who loves Himself by loving His creation. His self-pleasing is His self-giving.

The first simple form that it took for me was a letter to my mother saying that Christ had become a personal Saviour to me—in other words, I now began to honour Christ more than magnify myself. The second was when I returned for my last term to Marlborough. I knew nothing about a “duty to witness” or any such legalistic imposition on my fresh experience; but at least to one intimate friend, Henry de Candole, head of the house (and later Bishop of Knaresborough), I confided what had happened. His comment was, “Well, if that is real Christianity, none of us have it!” (though I am glad that has not remained true of Henry through the years!).

—*Once Caught No Escape*



Norman Grubb's

It's as Simple as This.

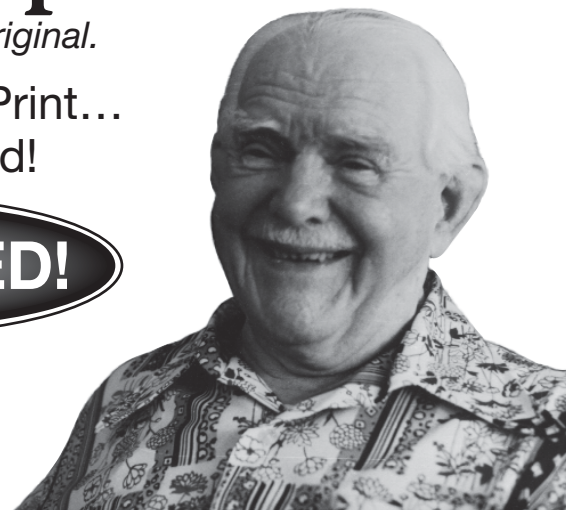
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The Prodigal

by Dacia Trethewey

We are reprinting Dacia Trethewey's story of how she came to repentance and the part her family and fellowship played in her restoration.

The travail of faith recounted in Dacia's story demonstrates God's Biblical principle of faith in action. This is God's daily dealings with His children. And Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever!

The younger son packed all his belongings and took a trip to a distant land...

In May of '95, I threw my arms up in the air and turned my back on God. At this time, I felt overwhelmed and unsure about what I was doing in life. There were many desires I had which seemed impossible to ever have filled. I thought my life was passing me by. I was 25, had braces, felt ugly, was overweight, felt like a failure, hated myself and how I looked, was self-conscious, envious and resentful of others who had what I wanted, believed that my desire for a right relationship and marriage was impossible, and I was unsure of my future and career.

The reason I stuck around here with my Christian fellowship, I began to believe, was because I needed financial security (I roomed with and split the rent with my sister and two of our friends). I hated how I felt most of the time and to medicate my feelings, I would overeat and then would try to exercise to make up for it. I wished I

could live by myself, and could not stop thinking about myself. I felt trapped and out of control and like I was always walking on eggshells to avoid rejection. I did not care about God or anyone else. Feeling desperate for an escape, I began to wish I could leave.

My problem was that I kept all this stirring inside and was not honest about it. I began to believe that I was better off before I turned my life over to God and was beginning to forget about the rebellious life I had come from—I had misused alcohol, drugs, and relationships with men. It seemed to me that my life was better then—I was free. I didn't want to fight any more, I just wanted an escape. I didn't think I had an alternative place to go, yet I didn't want to stay.

Family and friends in my fellowship cared about me and were concerned. They knew something was not right with me because I was quiet, withdrawn, unhappy, and isolating. The bottom line was that my cup was not running over; I was not resting in the freedom of Christ in me. This was obvious to others and they tried to give me a true picture. Instead of accepting others' view of my situation, I rebelled and held onto my own view. I wanted to escape and "make it on my own." I did not want to hear the fact that at this point in my life, I wasn't financially ready to live by myself.

A faithful friend tried to make me

understand that these desires were okay and could be possible in God's time. I would not trust God that if my desires were right with Him, He would work out the details. I held on tight to what I thought I wanted, an escape from everyone—my family, fellowship, church, everything that reminded me of my new life.

It seemed like God was saying to me, "What's it going to be?" I finally got fed up enough to say, *Forget it. I'm not doing this any more. Anything is better than this.* I wanted to be "free," whatever that meant; I wanted to get away from pain. I wanted it more than anything else — "my way or the highway."

And there he wasted all his life on wild living

I got an apartment and for a while I really did feel free. I was thrilled I did not have to face anyone, be phony, or be accountable. I no longer had to battle between what I wanted to do and what I thought I should do. I could come and go as I pleased; I didn't have to be around anyone and could do whatever I wanted with my free time; go out whenever I wanted to. I had escaped!

But freedom like this has a price. I was lonely. I went from having lots of people around who were interested in me to no one. Ironically, I had no free time to go out because of the two jobs I was working to pay the rent. I was exhausted all the time. I could

only think and care about myself. I was paranoid and didn't trust anyone. When I met people I thought, *if they really knew me, they wouldn't want to be around me.*

Other fears crowded in: *How could I meet a man who was interested in marrying me? Guys like that are interested in meeting my family.* I had cut off all of my friends and even my mother and sister. The family members I was in touch with, I used for my own ends. I was anxious and had trouble sleeping, always waiting for the axe to drop—waiting for the worst. I didn't really know what it would be. Maybe something really bad would happen that would be irreversible. That would be it. No more chances.

He began to be in need...

In November, I had surgery. Originally Mom had agreed to help me financially and help me recuperate. Now, however, she said that if I refused to turn from the path I had chosen, God had made it clear to her that she was not to be involved with my surgery in any way. I felt furious—she was pressuring me. I even admired her for taking the hard line, yet I still held on to my way.

I felt very powerless the day of surgery. Even though it was not a life-threatening operation, I was afraid God might take my life. And I knew it was not going to be good to face God. I remember thinking that if I woke up from my surgery, it was because God had a reason for it. When I opened my eyes in the recovery room, I was relieved. I felt a little hope.

That spring, my sister, Sheryl, made attempts to reach out to me. I'm sure I came across as angry because I always felt protective and paranoid. When Sheryl offered to

walk with me, it seemed risky, but I thought I could easily leave if she brought up anything about God to me. I wanted to see her, though, and agreed to meet her.

When we first started walking, I kept a strong guard up. I did not want her telling me that I was wrong and she was concerned. I wanted her to see that I was "fine." I wondered why she acted decent to me, and I was glad to see her. Because I felt threatened that she would catch a glimpse of what was really going on, I was selective about what I said to her.

Then Sheryl called me to ask me to dinner. I went more out of curiosity than anything, sure that she would start lecturing me. But I wanted to see what she really wanted. I told her it was no use talking to me about anything because I didn't want to hear it. I was angry and uncaring. I didn't want to give up the freedom I had gained and still believed I was better off now.

And here I am, dying of hunger

However, in the summer of 1996, I started experiencing more consequences. I was going further into financial debt and was dissatisfied with my life or any solutions I could come up with for my future. My general attitude was I really don't care.

I was spending time in bars, drinking more and more, was getting into sinful relationships, and finding myself in situations I didn't always want to be in. I was right back in the sin life I had come out of, and hating it. I was using people to make myself feel better, while pretending to genuinely care about them. Here I was, phony again! I felt out of control. When I stopped to think about it all, I began to see that what I was doing did not equal what I

really wanted.

By this time, I had experienced all the things I had wanted when I left, and realized that they were not my true wants. This was most apparent to me when I was in the middle of a bar full of people wondering, *What's the point of all this? Everything I wanted—approval, acceptance, beauty, popularity—they all pass away. I'm 26. Do I want to be doing this in five years? What about my deep desires for a family? For God? How are these needs going to be met hanging out with this crowd?* I knew I didn't have what it took to care for another person or raise a family. My thought processes were changing as I was getting more honest with myself, asking *What do I really want?* I knew I had a God-shaped vacuum in me—a gnawing emptiness inside that nothing in this world could fill.

This summer, Sheryl came to see me after work. I sat in her car while she read two testimonies I had written for *The Intercessor* years earlier. I knew I could leave at any moment, but felt like something held me. It was hard to believe that what I was hearing I had actually written. I wondered if I had really written it, but knew I had and that what I had said was true for me at a time in the past. I discounted it by thinking, *Yeah, right! It was true for me then, but not now.* I also thought, *It's a shame that it's not true for me now.* I'm sure I acted cold and reserved, in spite of what I was feeling. I told Sheryl that I meant it when I wrote it, but that was then and this is now. It might be true for me again, but not now. Impossible. I kept holding to what I considered a fact: I didn't know what I wanted. But I did know that I didn't want to go back to the way I was when I left—phony, wanting to escape, but pretending the opposite. But I asked Sheryl for copies of the testimonies thinking that I

might one day want something different. My only hope was that my wants had to change.

And when he came to himself

In September, Mom called and invited me to supper. I hadn't seen my mother since she appeared at my apartment one day. Her voice had sounded so familiar and warm and right. Even though I definitely felt drawn to her, I acted angry and protective and ended up being mean.

Having dinner with her felt risky, so I stalled. My thoughts swung back and forth. By this time I was wanting a way out: I didn't want to do what I was doing any more, but I didn't want to do what I thought it would take to change. I wanted Mom and my sister to be part of my life, but I did not want to be part of a "fellowship." I knew I was still out for myself; everything I wanted was still for me. Yet I knew that I could not change myself or make myself care. It seemed as though I was on one side of a canyon, wanting to get to the other side. But I had no idea how I could get there and felt unsure of my willingness to take the risk.

My only hope was God. My greatest fear was that if I threw myself onto God, maybe what He wanted for me would not be what I wanted. Finally, I was honest enough to play it out—going God's way was much more hopeful than the alternative. I was living the alternative and it was a dead end. Maybe this was God's way out for me. I decided to check it out.

I will arise and go to my father

The night of our dinner, I backed my car into the driveway, making sure I could get out of there fast if I wanted to. I felt weird going up the steps. The

last time I had been here, I was frantically packing, racing up and down the steps, trying to load my stuff in the car, terrified someone would show up. Yet here I was again. *This is so strange! What am I doing?* I didn't want to be trapped into making a decision I wasn't ready for. I was not going to be talked into anything. That would be a waste of time. I had said to God, *I'm not planting my feet anywhere until I am sure I will not pick them up again.*

I didn't expect what I saw when I walked in the door—light! bright! life! Such a contrast to my dark, damp apartment! Everything looked alive and clean and nice. On the table were the framed photos of friends and a picture on the wall painted by Sheryl and me. I felt like I was thawing out, but I was trying to keep my composure. It struck me that Mom was more of a person than I'd ever seen her. When I went into my old room, Sheryl patted the bed and said, "It's just waiting for you." *Yeah, that would be too good to be true.* I still didn't know how to get across that canyon.

At some point during dinner, Sheryl started talking about how painful my leaving had been for her. Then Mom and Sheryl talked about what it would mean for the rest of our family if the three of us were standing shoulder-to-shoulder in faith for them. Something was softening in me, but I didn't show it. I had been clinging to the hope that God could do something big for me in the future. I didn't dream it would happen that night or even that year. I hoped it wouldn't be on my deathbed.

I have sinned against heaven and in your sight

But Sheryl was saying, "This is it. You can do something right now."

Something was said about honesty, and before I knew it, I was spilling my guts out confessing my sin. As each detail came to mind, I'd think, *Don't hold back! Just get it out!* I still don't know how I got across that canyon. It seemed as though it was 99% God and 1% me. It's like I was in a dark hole clinging for all I was worth. God let down a line. I grabbed onto the line, and I was out of there. Immediately, I felt free!

Mom and Sheryl asked me to stay at the apartment that night and I agreed. And for that night I didn't want to go back to my apartment. I didn't know what was going to happen in the next minute, much less the future. Mom left and Sheryl and I stayed up, talking.

This brother of yours was dead, and is alive again!

At 1 a.m., my friend Ginny called and asked to speak to me. I said, "What are you doing calling *me*? You want to talk to *me*?" Mom had called her after leaving us. Ginny sounded so excited for me because I was free. She asked if I would come over; a group of friends were still up. *Come over?! Is this really happening?* This was the very thing I dreaded and thought was impossible. Now I wanted to see everyone but didn't know how. It was as though God was saying, "This is the opportunity you've been wanting. Here it is! Go for it!" *Why not!*

Walking to the door, I felt scared—like the biggest idiot—but humble. I had no big speech to say, even though I knew I had wronged everybody. I had expected to have to do some big penance thing. But when I walked in all I heard was, "Welcome home! Good for you!" They were glad I was freed from the bondage I was in. It seemed natu-

ral to be around again: I felt 100% *clean* and like I was home! This was what I truly wanted and knew I didn't deserve. I never thought this day would come.

He was lost but now is found!

As I wrote this, I found it hard to go back and relive the details of my sin. But by doing so, I have been able to see and experience some of the pain and

suffering that others who cared about me went through on the receiving end of my sin. I can begin to understand the heartache, disappointment, and pain others had as they believed for me the truth I refused to believe for myself.

Today I am remorseful about my sin choices and their consequences, yet thrilled and grateful that God has freed me from this bondage and will live the life I cannot. I know there is no

good in me, but the joy I have is the realization that I'm not just me; Christ lives in me. I'm merely His vessel to move about in. I know peace now in contrast to the desperation I knew when I rebelled against God. I learned that if Jesus Christ is not living my life, Satan is. There is no middle way—no such thing as "freedom." I ran away from God, thinking I was in bondage. But slavery to this "freedom" drove me back to God, the only freedom there is.

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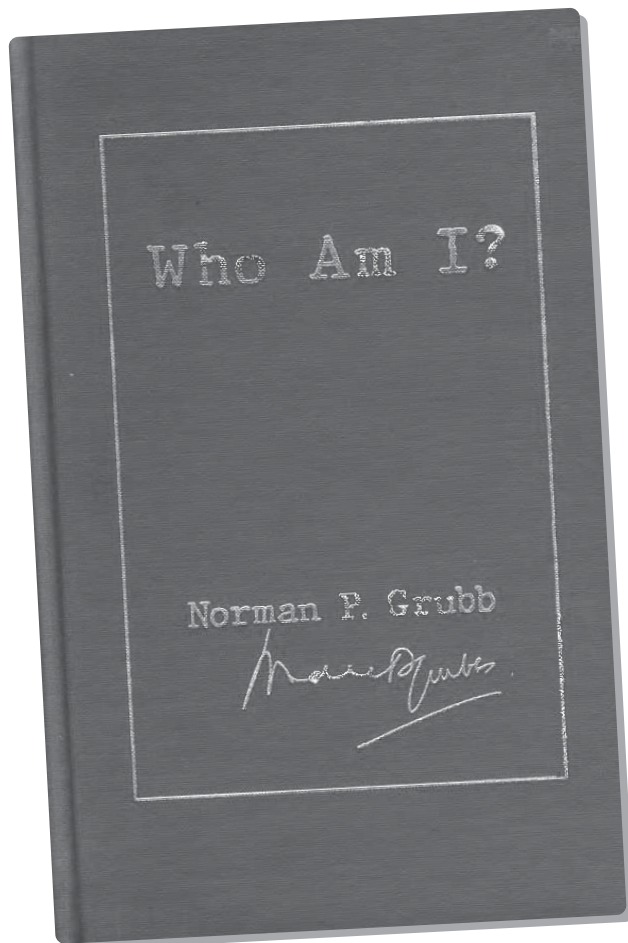
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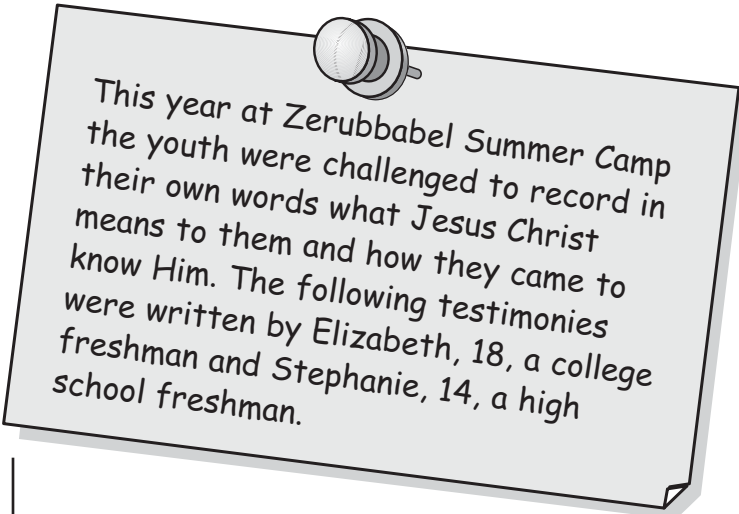
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True Repentence:

Testimonies of Young Lives Transformed



This year at Zerubbabel Summer Camp the youth were challenged to record in their own words what Jesus Christ means to them and how they came to know Him. The following testimonies were written by Elizabeth, 18, a college freshman and Stephanie, 14, a high school freshman.

I grew up in a Christian home and knew about Christ, but I did not understand the personal relationship we as Christians have with him. I went on in life thinking I was a Christian because I asked Him into my heart at age five.

When I entered high school, I became involved with the wrong group of friends and started making wrong choices. I hung out with a guy who was taking me down the wrong path. My mother decided to send me to a Christian boarding school.

At first I was angry and did not want to change my life. But in the first six months I got to know my dorm dad, Scott. He started showing me the way a father is supposed to be. My father was never really involved in my life, but Scott was a good role model.

In February of 2007 the girls in my dorm went to a Christian concert, and I re-committed my life to Christ. I realized that He makes me whole, complete and lacking nothing. I did not need any guy to fulfill that part of my life. Only Christ could. My time at boarding school became the foundation for my relationship with Christ and although I've graduated and will be starting college in the fall, my dorm dad remains my "dad."

I am so grateful that my mom sent me to that school. God is teaching me something new every day, and I am thankful for the new life I have been given.

-Elizabeth

When I was a toddler I would always whine and lie and stuff to get my way. One day as my cousin and I were playing at my house I lied to him and then lied about lying. So I was put in my room and my cousin and my Mom talked to me about how they would forgive me, but I also needed to ask for God's forgiveness. They told me how my heart was filled with sin but God could give me salvation. So that day I became a Christian.

A few years later I was talking to my baby-sitter about being a Christian. She told me about how she had become a Christian at a young age too. But she said she was about 13 when she realized that she was still a sinner and had only become a Christian by going to church and believing that there was a God. So that night I asked God if I was still a sinner and then asked him to wash me clean of my sins (again).

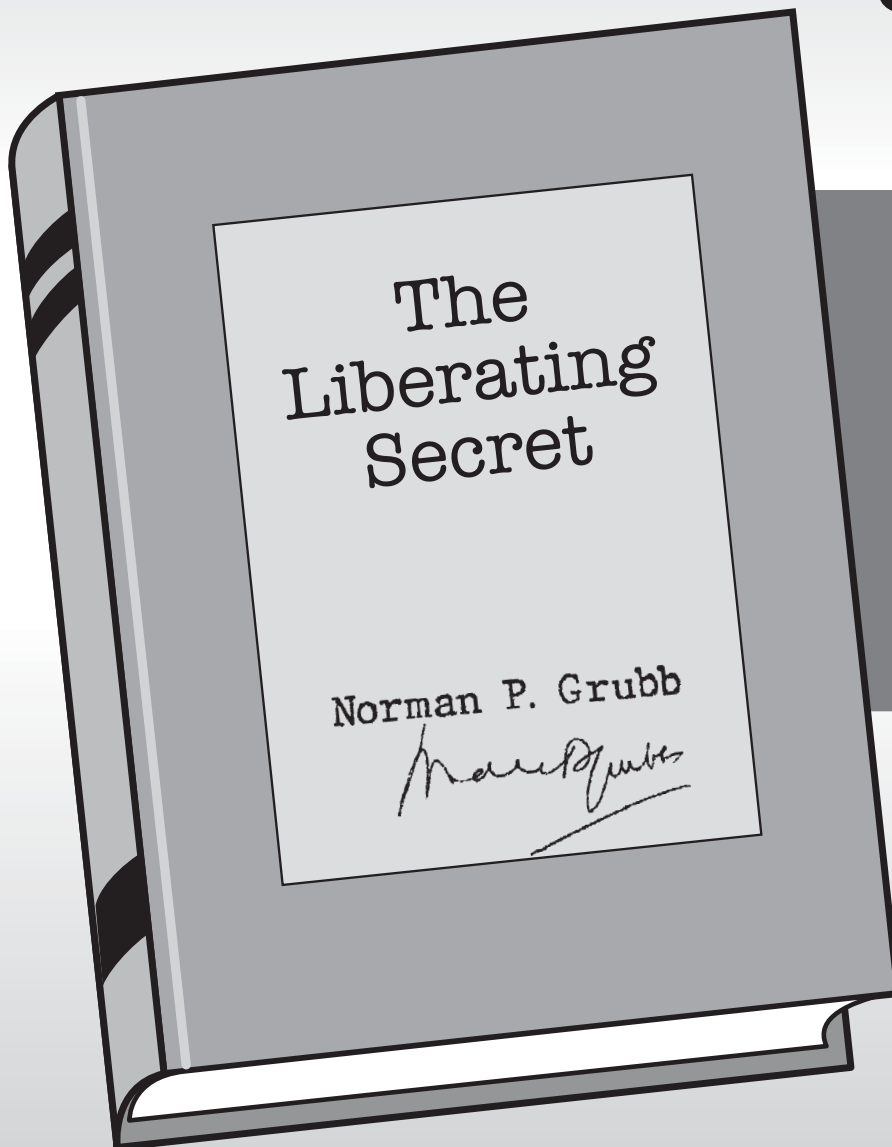
In 7th grade I had started lying and being a self-centered brat. I was being mean to my parents and my church family and God helped me see it was wrong. (Helped me through my parents and grandmother). So I asked God to help me straighten up my life and help me resist temptations. And even though I still sometimes lie and fall into temptation, I can tell my life is changing through God and His grace.

-Stephanie

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Quick Down, Quick Up

by Norman Grubb

I do not always leap upwards in faith under my pressures. I sometimes jump down. That is when I sin. My human reactions, though negative, are not sin. They become sin when I follow them through negatively: my dislike for a person, instead of being replaced by God's love, continues unchecked as hate; I fear, and, instead of exchanging fear for faith, I take flight and run away from God's will: a feeling of impatience or resentment is expressed in the angry word or lost temper, instead of being swallowed up by God's patience or quiet acceptance of His way. Anger is right when expressing genuine concern for others: it is wrong when, as so often, it is to compensate my own hurt feelings. Pride is expressed in magnifying Christ ("making my boast in the Lord," as the Bible calls it) or it can be in making much of myself.

Though even at this spot we have to beware of the bondage of false condemnation. We are real selves as well as it being Christ in us: therefore, we do have pleasure as well as giving Him pleasure: we do have motives as well as being motivated by Him. If a person thanks me because something I have said has made Christ more real to him, I have no necessity every time to stop him short and say, "Give the thanks to God." In thanking me, he really means as a channel, and I as a channel am rightly also pleased that I have been a channel for Him. I must not accuse myself of pride because I do feel pleased.

Equally, when my main motive in

some action has been believing it to be God's will, yet I discern also that I had a personal motive of the gain or enjoyment I also get from it, I must not therefore condemn myself. As a real self, I have my pleasure, my motives, my sense of personal gain in a thing. The point is that that is not my main motive. God's will, God's work, and God's glory is my main objective; as it is He by me, I too anticipate pleasure, satisfaction and gain from it.

I saw that true living is when the purpose is for others, and the secondary effect is the pleasure or gain I have from it. False living is when my pleasure or gain is primary and the purposes of my living incidental.

This is how it is with God Himself. Years ago I began to justify my conscious egoism by discovering that the Bible said of God that "for thy pleasure they are and were created," and of Jesus Christ that "for the joy set before Him He endured the cross." "Then God does things for selfish reasons," I said, "the same as I do." Of course, I had missed the point which I saw later, when my own self-centredness had been exchanged for God-centredness. I saw that true living is when the purpose is for others, and the secondary effect is the pleasure or gain I have from it. False living is when my pleasure or gain is pri-

mary and the purposes of my living incidental. This is true in all life's activities, such as the simple difference between eating to live (and incidentally getting pleasure out of it), and living to eat!

God's pleasure, Christ's joy are an outcome of His giving Himself, not pleasing Himself. True pleasure is when my self-pleasing is fulfilled in self-giving, and my self-love finds full satisfaction in other-love. There is total self-fulfilment. Self exists to be fulfilled, whether God's self or ours. There is self-sufficiency and a consciousness that we can be what we should be and do what we should do. But, as Jesus said, we find ourselves by losing ourselves in God's love activities, and the reflex effect of such living is the pleasure, gain and satisfaction it brings us. Paul said it: "As dying and behold we live": "As poor yet making many rich": and yet finally returning its rich treasures on us who, though having nothing, yet find we possess all things.

God's everlasting joy "and the good pleasure" He finds in His will, and all the outpoured adoration seen by John around the throne in the Book of the Revelation is the response to Him, Father, Son and Spirit, of a creation which has its being in His self-giving love, and a redemption which was Himself in His precious blood going to final limits in redeeming His enemies by dying for them.

We, the redeemed, though we do not live a life of continued sinning, do commit sins, usually sudden and unpremedi-

tated. What then do we do? We have not broken relationship with God, but have interrupted fellowship from our side of the relationship. We have asserted our freedom by acting as if we were not one with Him; but were once again our independent selves and going our own way. Just because we are one with Him, we are guilty and know it.

The way back is as simple and plain as on our first coming to God. If there is quick sinning, there is quick cleansing. It has to start at the point of my personal freedom, where I went wrong, and I must express that freedom in honest confession. That is all I can do about it, but that I must do, and that means my brokenness. It may involve confession to man or restitution, but it certainly means admission to God of my sin. When I do that, it is as if God says to me, “Yes, you sinned, and honest confession and repentance were necessary. But as for the sin, I settled the whole sin question 2,000 years ago in the atoning death of my Son. Through him sins are no more. I have forgotten them. You can forget them.”

At this point we have to be careful not to add a second sin to the first. The first was the sin itself, the second and greater is if I don’t believe at once that what God has cleansed, He has cleansed. Not to believe in the efficacy of the blood of Christ is a worse sin than the first, for unbelief, Jesus said, is the only real sin (John 16:9).

Some are also troubled by the repetition of sins in their lives. How can they be delivered from doing it again and again? The answer is that Christian living is not in the past or the future, but only in the present. The Bible word is “walk,” continually used in the New Testament. Walk is present tense and

can only be a step at a time; and the walk is with a Person, with Jesus. Therefore we do not find deliverance by looking to the past or future for some fool-proof formula; but forgetting our search for deliverance, we become occupied by the simple walk with the Deliverer. Put it this way, as some African Christians said: “Leave the past under the blood, leave the future with God, and get walking!” Live in the present. Again—if we sin, take the way of repentance and get cleansed. Don’t sin what the Africans call the second sin, which is not believing the immediate

If there is quick sinning, there is quick cleansing. It has to start at the point of my personal freedom, where I went wrong, and I must express that freedom in honest confession. That is all I can do about it, but that I must do, and that means my brokenness.

efficacy of the precious blood, for unbelief is the worst sin of all. Praise and thank, whatever one may feel, for praise is the verbal demonstration of faith.

Don’t then be concerned about constant repetitions of the same sin. Deliverance from repeated acts of sin is not to be had by looking at the sin or at myself, and wondering how repetition can be avoided; it is by the daring look to Jesus, and the leaving of the problem of repetition to Him. The past is no longer there through Christ, the future is not my business; so if at this moment you are walking with Jesus, be thankful. If and when the sudden fall comes, get in the clear again with God, and walk

on—looking neither to past nor future. Walking with Him is the way (“I am the way”), and we are much less likely to be tripped up in such a simple single-eyed walk than if we are tense about the past or future and holding on to some supposed formula of deliverance.

Even if we are bound by a habit, or even if we are not willing to be delivered from a habit, the deliverance or the change of will to make us willing can never come by our attention being centered on the habit; but only again by a daring leap of faith which affirms that God is our deliverer and that He is the one who makes us “will and do after His good pleasure,” therefore we take it by faith that this has happened here and now, though we feel no difference, and we boldly walk out on the settled fact.

Sin, indeed, is not the real problem, but the guilt that follows, which condemns and binds us. This, again we say, is Satan’s secret weapon. He will trip us up by some subtle temptation. Having got us down, his real purpose is to keep us down by the pouring on of condemnation. We must, therefore, know how, when tripped, to get up quickly, to get standing again in the armour of God and keep walking. Faith is the means. Faith which is action, and by which we boldly thank God that the sin is no more. We may go on feeling guilty or stained, but we turn our attention away from the feelings and we replace them by faith. We replace guilt by praise, and walk on with Him as before.

—*The Spontaneous You*

Conviction, Confession, Cleansing

By Norman Grubb

To walk in continuous revival involves three main points: Walking with Jesus, Brokenness, Cups Running Over. But when cups do not run over, which is very often—then what?

Only sin stops the inner witness. Then how are we to know what the sin is? The answer to that is to be found by reading on in the key chapter of 1 John 1. Verse 3 has spoken of two-way fellowship, and verse 4 of fullness of joy. Verse 5 gives a surprise. John says he is now going to give us the inner truth about Him with whom we walk. He is... love? No—"God is light." If it just said "love," that would be easy, for I might escape a too strict facing of sin by saying, "Well, anyhow He loves"—which is indeed what I have often said. But "this is the message...God is light."

What does that mean? Well, nothing could be more simple. The obvious main function of

light is to reveal things as they are. The Scriptures themselves state: "Whatever maketh manifest is light..." (Ephesians 5:13). Light is very silent, does not push or drive anyone away, but is inescapable to any honest person. You can't lie to light. If you hit your toe against an object in the dark, you may mistakenly say that it is a table. But when the light is turned on in the room, you can no longer continue to say that it is a table if it really is a piano. Light just gives you the lie.

God is light. Silently, inexorably He shines on and in us, revealing things just as they are in His sight. Have you ever noticed the pivotal place given, even in salvation, to our response to light? In John 3, we are distinctly told that men are not lost because of their sins (for they have already been atoned for) but they are lost for refusing the light. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, but

men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." Light silently showed them exactly what they are in God's holy sight, but they won't acknowledge it. No, they will never "come to the light" and admit themselves to be what God says they are. But the only way any of us have been saved has been by responding to that light and saying about ourselves what God says. Thus our eternal destiny hangs on whether we love darkness or come to the light.

But even as this is true concerning the unsaved and the necessity of their "coming to the light," it is also true in 1 John 1 of the believer and the necessity of his "walking in the light." He also can walk in darkness (verse 6) if he wishes to do so. That is to say, he can refuse to admit, concerning himself, what God says about him; he can have other and more convenient names for his sins. Worse still, he can be either a

deliberate hypocrite (saying he has fellowship with Him, but really walking in the darkness), or he can be self-deceived and not recognize that he is sinning when he is saying he has no sin (verse 8).

So it gets down to this. Sin is a revelation. It is God who graciously shows us sin, even as it is He who shows us the precious blood. Sin is only seen to be SIN—against God—when He reveals it; otherwise sin may just be known as a wrong against a brother, or an antisocial act, or an inconvenience, or a disability, or some such thing. Indeed that is often the extent of the message of a “social gospel”—to be rid of sin as a hindrance to brotherhood, as an inconvenience to human progress; not as coming short of the glory of God. GOD shows us sin. We do not need to keep looking inside ourselves. This is not a life of introspection or morbid self-examination. We do not walk with sin, we walk with Jesus; but, as we walk in childlike faith and fellowship with Him step by step, moment by moment, then if the cups cease to run over, He who is light, with whom we are walking, will clearly show us what the *sin* is which is hindering—what its real name is in His sight, rather than the pseudonym, the excusing title, which we might find it more convenient to call it.

Let us say again, it is so simple. God does not speak in terms of general condemnation, leading to despair of the past or to fear of the future. He speaks in simple,

specific terms of any actual sin in the present which is hindering the inner witness of His Spirit.

What do we do then? Well, that is obvious. 1 John 1:9 says, “If we confess our sins....” The word *confess* is the word *say* with the preposition *con* or *with* added. Three times over in those verses 5–10 man has said his own say (verses 6, 8, 10); but to confess is to say with another, to say what another says. To confess is to say about my sin what God says about it. “You say that is sin, Lord; so do I.” That is confession; of course, accompanied by the desire to be rid of the sin, and an actual ceasing to do the thing or maintain the attitude, whatever it may be.

Then where there is this confession, we all know there is the word of promise: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” We may say the cleansing is almost automatic, where there is the confession. That light which shines so unchangingly on the sin shines also on the blood. “If we walk in the light, as He is in the light,” says John, “we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.” When walking in the light, we read, both sin and the precious blood are seen—the one, praise God, canceling out the other. And it is important to remember that confession of sin does not deliver by itself. It is *the blood* that cleanses,

and we must always pass on from confession to faith and praise for *the blood*, believing that the blood alone is what glorifies God and delivers us. Folk often remain depressed and mournful and asking others to pray for them after confession of sin, when they ought to pass straight on by simple faith to the blood ever flowing and cleansing, as in the words of the old hymn:

*The cleansing blood, I see, I see;
I plunge, and oh, it cleanses me.
It cleanses me, it cleanses me;
Oh praise the Lord, it cleanses me.*

Once again, where the blood cleanses, the Spirit witnesses, and where the Spirit witnesses, the cups always run over! So we are back again where we started—walking with Jesus step by step, brokenness, cups running over. When they stop running over, it is always sin. Sin is seen as sin in the light of God. As we walk in that light, we recognize and confess our sins; the blood cleanses; the Spirit witnesses; and the cups run over again!

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False Condemnation

by Norman Grubb

It would be good to underline the danger of constant condemnation through the law, of which warning is given in Rom. 8:1. It is probably the most prevalent cause of unhappiness and ineffectiveness among God's people. If the thunders of the law have ceased to terrify us through the peace of justification, the pointing finger of the law at our daily shortcomings is a constant discomfort. For we do "come short of the glory of God," and do so daily. What are we to do about it? We can liken ourselves, our renewed selves in Christ, to a piece of elastic. We are hidden in Him, we abide in Him, but Satan and his unclean demons, using all methods of allurements and disturbance that this distorted world affords, find plenty of means of pulling at the elastic! We are "drawn away of our own desires and enticed," and often the enticement leads on to consent, and we have sinned (James 1:14, 15). Not the blatant sins of our past life, not certainly persistent sinning, for those who do that are not born of God (1 John 3:9); but wrong attitudes of heart and mind, the quick word, selfishness, impatience, sins of the eyes, sloth in witness, the finer points of failure in holiness, which we had never even noticed in our insensitive days; these we fall into and mourn our fall. And the moment we have been spotted by the flesh, if we don't get clear at once, the law is in operation and we are condemned; for we have slipped back

into that self-law sin realm of Rom. 7.

Then how get out, and how learn to get out quickly? First, there is the big lie of the Accuser of the brethren. He will cast doubts on our crucified position in Christ, and try to tell us that our "old man" is still very much alive in us. That is a falsehood. But many accept it, and drag their feet through life on the false assumption that they have a divided self, a divided heart, a

...we must not stay, even temporarily, under condemnation, when Satan has caught us out. It is the easiest thing to do, and our distressed feelings are really self-pity and pride. It is not so much that we have grieved *the Lord* that disturbs us, as that *we* have failed.

divided nature. Their conception of Christian living is a continuous struggle, a losing battle between their old nature and their new: "the flesh lusteth against the spirit, the spirit against the flesh; these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." But that does not mean two co-equal natures battling in the believer one against the other. We have only one nature at a time; we cannot have more, for our nature is our

very selves. We *were* by nature the children of wrath, we *are* partakers of the divine nature. That is the death and resurrection in Christ. No half measures about that! The old nature is the old man which has been crucified with Christ. The new nature is the new man, which is we risen with Christ and Christ living in us. This verse of Gal. 5:17 on flesh and (the human redeemed) spirit is a concentration in a few words of the teaching of Rom. 7.

We live and walk in the Spirit, led by the Spirit (Gal. 5:25, 16, 18). We are not then walking in the flesh (independent self), which we have crucified (5:24). Because we are not walking in the flesh, the law has no claim on us, for it only presents its demands to independent self (5:18). Because the law has no hold on us, the lusts of the flesh (the motions of sin in the flesh) are not stimulated by its challenge to impose their demands on us (flesh lusting against spirit), and to dominate our helpless self (ye cannot do the things that ye would). While we abide in Christ, we are dead in Him to law, and therefore dead to sin which is by the law.

But if we do not walk in the Spirit, then we return again under law, into the flesh and self-effort, and therefore under the dominion of sin in the flesh. That is not a question of an old and new nature, which was settled at the new birth. This "flesh and spirit" matter is a question of the daily walk, and the possibility of slipping back any

time for a visit to the flesh and thus to sin, law and condemnation.

So we have to learn not to accept the big lie of our return to a permanent old condition, just because we are caught out by the flesh on occasions: nor to live in the bondage of a false, but very commonly held conception of being two people at once, with a civil war within, a good and bad nature, and who will win? No. Let us confess with the same assured voice as Paul that “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath set me free from the law of sin and death.”

But then equally we must not stay, even temporarily, under condemnation, when Satan has caught us out. It is the easiest thing to do, and our distressed feelings are really self-pity and pride. It is not so much that we have grieved *the Lord* that disturbs us, as that *we* have failed. The acceptance of condemnation is a form of self-righteousness. *God* has told us, when we sin, to get quickly to the light, recognize and confess the sin, and then He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse our consciences from all sense of unrighteousness. “The cleansing fount I see, I see; I plunge, and oh, it cleanseth me.” To remain in condemnation, therefore, is really disobedience and hurt self. We can learn many lessons from simple believers who keep short accounts with God. They are tripped up, they humbly recognize it, they claim the cleansing blood, and go on their way rejoicing; and often they use their testimony to such daily simple experiences to be a blessing to others. The elastic of the new self has been stretched by temptation; let it snap back into place.

—*The Deep Things of God*

Unexpected Visitors

By Meryl Langley

One day recently, I had been out and about doing various things and had just arrived home (God’s timing). I heard a knock at the door and on opening it, was met by a very amiable gentleman. “Are you Meryl Langley?” he asked. Introductions were made and Ian (Harvie) informed me that he had been receiving *The Intercessor* magazine for years. He was very grateful that the magazine just “kept on coming and kept on coming.” Ian had a Christian brother with him, so they both came in to visit. They are both church leaders in Cumbria (a three hour drive from Northampton) and were at an International Christian meeting at a Christian Conference Centre within walking distance from our home. Ian did not know this at the time, however, so plugged our zip code into his GPS and could not believe we were “just round the corner,” so to speak!

We chatted about Norman Grubb, since Ian noticed we had a photo of Norman in our home. We exchanged details about ourselves, our families and how I became part of the Zerubbabel Fellowship. It was such a wonderful surprise for me in the middle of the afternoon and we shared our experiences of knowing that we (Satan/us) had died and it was now Jesus Christ living His life by us. We had never even met each other at the beginning of the day and here we were chatting about Jesus Christ as if we had known each other a long time.

After about half an hour my visitors needed to leave to get back to their meeting, but not without Ian giving me a very generous check towards mailing the *The Intercessor* magazine.

You know, only recently we had our annual Easter gathering with folks from Ireland and we had been discussing reaching out to readers on our mailing list. The very next week, lo and behold, here was one of our readers contacting us! God sure has everything in His hands.

The Joy of Hosting a Zerubbabel Get-Together

by Carol Hoffmann

On April 25th we hosted a Wisconsin area Zerubbabel Get-Together at our home. It was a delight on many levels! Initially, I thought the event would be mostly outreach to *The Intercessor* magazine subscribers and to friends whom we have mentioned some aspects of the “Total Truth.” It turned out to be that and more.

Early 2009, after the decision was made to go ahead with the Zerubbabel Get-Together, one of the first things the Z Press office did was to send out a “save the date” postcard to all *The Intercessor* magazine subscribers within two hundred miles of our home. We received responses from only a few subscribers, who received the mailing, only to discover that many in our area did not receive the postcard at all or received it quite a while later. Yikes!!! I reminded myself that it’s God’s business how it all works out. Joanna Coatney reminded me while discussing the postcard situation, “If God meant it to be different it would be.”

In the meantime, to help get the date of our meeting out early, we started to tell friends about our upcoming “Get-Together.” Later, we mailed a follow up letter after Z-Press drafted a letter for anyone who responded to the postcard. In addition, we also sent an invitation letter similar to the “follow up letter” mentioned earlier, to all

The Intercessor magazine subscribers within a one hundred mile radius.

As our Zerubbabel Get-Together approached, I decided to contact, by email or phone, some of the people who expressed interest in attending our meeting. Even though contacting people that I have never met before felt scary, I reminded myself that since I am a vessel of Christ, He is love to them as me and the words I speak are His words. My husband, Dave, and I also worked with our daughter, Carin, to send a Facebook invitation to some of her friends.

April 24: What a delight to welcome Chris Anderson and Steven Prewitt, friends and teacher/sharers from Boone, NC, who would be presenting their testimonies and teachings at our conference. Dave and I considered it an honor to make sure that they were comfortable and taken care of prior to the meeting. What an opportunity to get to know them better also.

April 25: “Get-Together” day finally arrived, and after taking care of some last minute preparations for the meeting, I admitted to feeling pretty nervous. In the same breath, I said to myself that this is God’s meeting and it’s His business how many people come and how it turns out. Besides five family members attending, five additional people also came who were blessed along with us to

hear Chris Anderson’s testimony and the teaching of “Body, Soul and Spirit” by Steven Prewitt.

After Chris shared how his life didn’t work before he learned and applied Galatians 2:20 to it, Steven shared the Truth using different illustrations. The first illustration showed us God’s supremacy: He is pictured above His creation as an umbrella with all things, including us and Satan, underneath that umbrella.

Next, Steven discussed illustrations in the Bible used to describe Christians as containers of the Holy Spirit such as vessels, branches, temples, slaves, Christ’s bride, and His body. To further illustrate born again Christians as God’s containers, Steven drew three circles, illustrations that looked like a bull’s eye and represent humans’ three parts: body, soul and spirit (Hebrews 4:12). We of course know we have a body, our soul is where thoughts (reasoning) and feelings (emotions) originate. Our spirit is the part of us that is always in union with a diety spirit—Christ’s Holy Spirit or Satan’s spirit. (1 Cor. 2:11-12) According to Ephesians 2:2, before we are believers our spirits are one with Satan’s spirit, the spirit that works in the children of disobedience. Once we accept Christ as our savior, Satan’s spirit that was connected to our human spirit is booted out and the

Holy Spirit becomes one with our spirit (1 Cor. 6:17; Gal. 2:20). There is never a time that we are independent, separated from Satan's spirit of error or Christ's Holy Spirit.

So how does it work and what about our thoughts and feelings that sometimes seem to be contrary to these Bible truths? If Christ is living through us, why do we still sin? Steven used honest, down to earth life examples to explain. For example: "I am afraid and inadequate to speak in front of all these people; maybe I should just stay in my hotel room." But the truth is "Christ/Holy Spirit is in union with my spirit; therefore, I can say 'I *feel* afraid and inadequate to speak to these people, but Christ-I can do it through me and will say what he wants through me'" (Gal. 2:20). Sin/Satan misuse would be believing

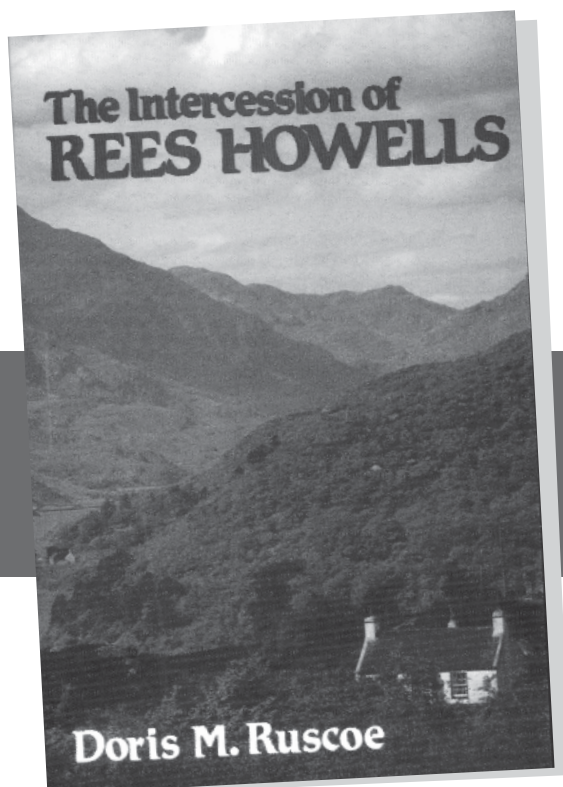
the first statement and staying in his hotel room.

Though I had previously heard what Steven taught, a few ideas really jumped out: thoughts or feelings are neutral and normal no matter how good, bad, shameful, or embarrassing or superior they seem. Satan gets his hooks into us and "desires give birth to sin" (James 1:15) when we believe that "we" shouldn't feel or think a certain way or when we believe any other lie about who we are. The truth is we are merely containers/vessels and as Christians we contain Him and He lives His life through us. We are not an independent "I" that is good, bad or anything of importance, just containers.

Having a Z-Get-Together was a rewarding experience. Not only was it an opportunity to get in touch with local subscribers, but also an opportu-

nity to invite others and share some of our beliefs with friends and family. It was also a pleasure to work with Zerubbabel ministries to coordinate the meeting and further get to know Chris and Steven. Plus, listening to Chris's testimony and Steven's teaching, the "how to's" of living from who I am, Christ as me, was clarified further. Even afterwards, the opportunities to get in touch and possibly form relationships with *The Intercessor* subscribers continues: we have received a few calls after our Get Together from subscribers who got our mailing but could not attend the meeting.

If you would like to find out about hosting a get-together in your area please contact our office at 828-295-7982 or email us at info@zerubbabel.org.



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It Remains *Tough*

by Norman Grubb

Daily life is by no means just easy smooth-running times. It is constantly disturbed by small things or big. Something lost, something gone wrong, responsibilities to fulfill, demanding children, finances, sickness, clashes of personalities, differences of viewpoint, decisions to be made. And at these many moments, self doesn't remain spontaneous! It comes very much alive and we have our human reactions. It is at this spot that we find it hard to grasp that this is precisely God's purpose that His sons should be involved in disturbing human situations. The positive must have its negative to manifest through, so we must learn to the full what it is

to be a negative. It was said of Jesus Himself that though He was a Son, He yet learned obedience through the things which He suffered, and thus knew that the Son could do nothing of Himself.

We ask a useless question and mistake the meaning of life if we say, "Will there be no let-up from continual pressures?" No. Let me face this in the full depth of its implications. If I am to function in my proper place as a son and inheritor of God's universe in my eternal destiny, I need to learn first how a son functions in adverse circumstances. A swimmer grows strong against the tide, not with it. So my privilege is to feel the

impacts on my negative humanity of all that can disturb me. It is tribulation, Paul said, which works in me finding and experiencing the God of deliverances. It is the trial of my faith which works maturity in me, says James.

There is a fundamental principle here, and when we see that, we can expect and welcome what the world calls problems and frustrations. If in our future destiny we are to be at ease in letting God through in friendly areas of responsibility, it can only be because we gradually became experienced in letting Him through in the enemy's territory. So these years in the world against the tide are no mistake.

They are not something which need not have been. They have to be. If we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him. We must first learn therefore, and accept with praise as the adventure of adversity, the reality of life's pressures and our constant negative human reactions to them. By this means only, first finding how earthen our vessels are, shall we then by stages be ever quicker, as Jesus so wonderfully was, in knowing how to replace our negative with His positive. That way we become at home in the eternal fact that His strength can only be made perfect in our weakness; and find Paul's secret that "when I am weak, then am I strong." This is of vast

importance because we so mistakenly have got used to thinking that we are wrong when we have these negative reactions. No, they must be.

So we shall always start by feeling human hurts, fears, dislikes, unwillingness, coldness, powerlessness, lusts, angers, jealousies, and all the list of them. Start, we say, because the start of such reactions is not sin. A human must be human, and Jesus himself had to feel temptation to be tempted in all points. Sin is not in the start, but in the continuance. Negative reactions are not sin. They are the negative stirrings which are the jumping off point for faith. Sins are when, instead of taking those jumps of faith, we continue in the reaction. "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." When we "marry" the self-reaction, accept and continue in it, then the child is sin. We have already quoted how Paul went as far as to "take pleasure" in those experi-

ences which hurt us humans: what he named as feeling his weakness, being hurt or insulted by others, having personal needs, being persecuted, having insoluble problems: "for," he said, "when I am weak, then am I strong." Note, not "then I shall be made strong or become strong or seek for strength." No, "then am I strong," because all he had to do was to recognize who he really was, Christ in him. So to have negative human reactions is not sin, but our opportunities for faith. Sin is when we continue in the reaction, as we all do at times, and then act out some form of "the works of the flesh."

It is this balanced understanding of our daily living which will save us from false condemnation. We shall not say we were all wrong because we felt so and so—a very ordinary day, no great victories or guidances, no particular elevated feelings, the pressures of daily events, the children's problems and

the work conditions, attacks of depression, no answers to situations. "Surely I should have been brighter or more effective or a better witness. Haven't I missed opportunities and not been courageous enough?" And so the self-searching tears us down. Cut it out! Praise the Lord. Recognize that if you have a sin, it is the sin

because that is the only way a person can walk. So when in our walk, we feel we have missed the mark, even if we are not sure whether it is over the line into a committed sin, or just one of these attitudes, the way out is simple: admission to ourselves and that is of course inwardly to God; bold recognition that all the

Negative reactions are not sin. They are the negative stirrings which are the jumping off point for faith. Sins are when, instead of taking those jumps of faith, we continue in the reaction.

of unbelief in doubting or questioning whether He was being Himself in you despite feelings or appearances. Believe and praise!

And where these have been conscious sins, or we feel they may have been sins, it is here John tells us that there is daily cleansing in our daily walk. The Epistles constantly use the word "walk," and that points us to step by step,

sins of all the world ceased to exist in God's sight (and therefore in ours) by the shedding of the Blood of Christ two thousand years ago: the word of faith which we say within ourselves that therefore that sin exists no more: praise in having the cleansed conscience: then walking on as if the thing never happened. Quick sinning. Quick cleansing.

-Who Am I?

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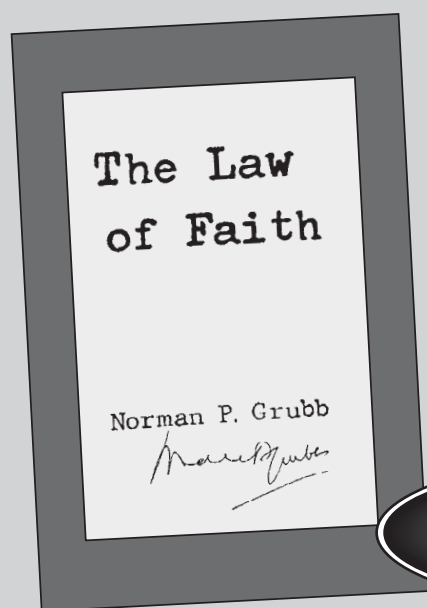
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Norman Grubb's

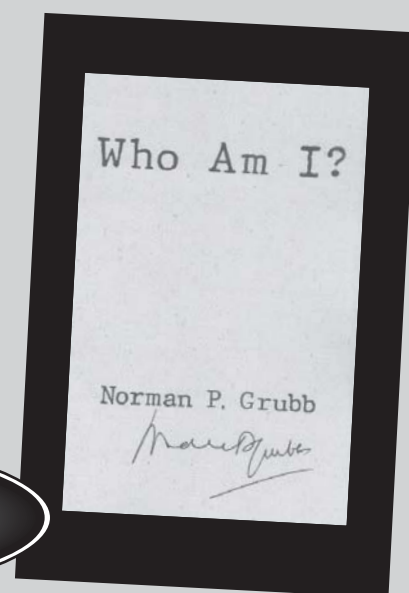
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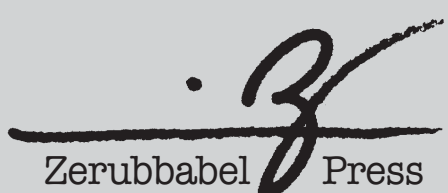
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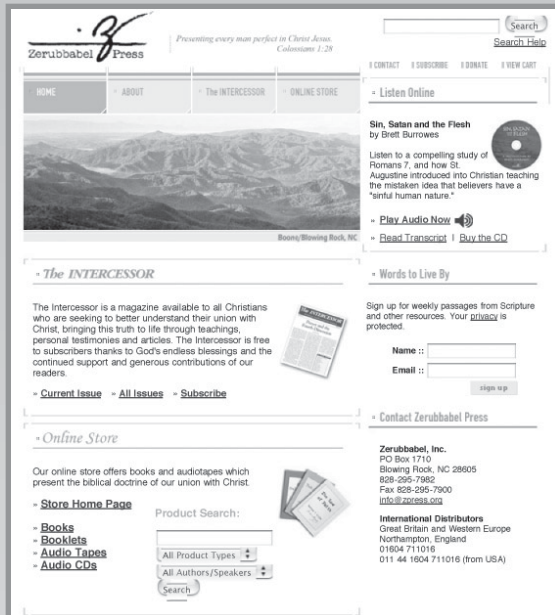


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For behold what earnestness this very thing, this godly sorrow, has produced in you: what vindication of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what avenging of wrong!"

—2 Corinthians 7:10-11

(*New American Standard*)

Words to Live By...

Honesty is when by some means or other (God has a thousand original ways), we are brought up sharp enough in our lives, suddenly or gradually, to be faced with the plain recognition that we are not what we should be. We are law breakers. The moment of truth is when in our freedom we admit that fact. That is honesty, and that is also a total self-humiliation. The supposed foundations to our selfhood have given way.

Subscriptions

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The Intercessor is published for about \$5,200 an issue on the Lord's provisions. We have had a generous outpouring of God's gifts thus far and are truly grateful to each who has participated. By faith, we look for the continual outflow of the "word of God" by us.

Material related solely to the magazine (i.e., letters, questions, information, articles for publication, etc.) should be sent to the magazine office address, PO Box 1710, Blowing Rock, NC 28605. To make tax-deductible financial contributions for all Zerubbabel outreaches, or to seek information on the Zerubbabel outreach activities, this address should also be used.

Postage is paid at Blowing Rock, NC.

Zerubbabel Audio Ministry

The audio cassette tapes listed below were recorded live at various gatherings and many contain some background noise. The latest techniques in digital editing were employed to reduce background noise and produce CD's of these same teachings by Norman Grubb. In both cases, editing of the content has been kept to a minimum to preserve the valuable truths these recordings contain.

NORMAN GRUBB

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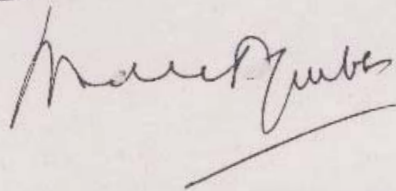
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