



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Issue 60

Victory Is a Man

by – Chip Brogden (edited and abridged)

"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 15:57).

Veryone who looks does not see. Everyone who hears does not listen. What are we looking for? What is it that we need to see? What would God reveal to us? There is but one desire of God for us, and that is that we may see Christ. ... He is pleased to give us His Son, and He delights for us to look only to Him. Not even the things He gives, but to Him who is the Gift. ...

If we know the Son, if we possess the Son, if we see the Son, we know and possess and see all that God has and is, for He has deposited all of Himself into His Son, and all of His Son He deposited into us.

As we progress we begin to ask for and seek spiritual “things” in order to have a victorious Christian life. We learn to do this from watching what everyone else is doing. We seek many blessings from God. We pray many prayers and make many requests. Sometimes it seems we are given what we ask for, and sometimes it seems we are unchanged. So we struggle on, always searching for something out in space a thousand miles away that will change us from being defeated to being victorious.

The whole problem is that we view victory as something out in the twilight zone of the Spirit, while we are struggling along here on Planet Earth, toiling and sweating as we wrestle and fight against a powerful adversary. To us, victory is something we do not have, something we cannot see, something we are not experiencing, something that we must search for and diligently seek out until we find it. The routine of daily life

becomes old.

We hope to find the victory we seek in a new book, or a tape, or a teaching, or a ministry, or a church, or a group, or a video, or a seminar, or a special speaker, or a website, or a special discipline, or a spiritual regimen. We go through them one by one, and some of them even seem to work short-term, but eventually they will sit on the shelf in the recesses of our mind, collecting dust and never being put into practice beyond the initial excitement of having learned a new thing or riding the wave of the latest spiritual fad.

God does not give us a thing called victory. Instead, He gives us His Son to be our Victory. Christ is Victory. It is not a question of going forth to war in the name of Jesus and claiming the victory in advance. May I say that Victory does not depend upon whether or not you “claim” anything? Victory is a Man! Overcoming is entering into Victory Himself, being clothed with Victory, sharing in the Life of One Who overcame. Thus, our victory is bound up in the Lord Himself. It is not a separate

(continued on page 667)

Victory Is a Man.....	665
Jury Duty.....	669
Why This Waste?	670
The Blood in Relation to Repentance, Acceptance and Fellowship.....	673
Paul's Need to Read	674
Alabaster Boxes	675

Dear Rich Ones (II Corinthians 8:9).

This is our 60th issue of the *BSN*. We published the first issue in May of 1989. Over the past thirteen years, we have taken many transitional steps – steps that have reflected things that we learned from the Scriptures. Looking back through the issues one can “watch” the transition unfold. And I am sure there are many more transitions to follow. So, remember, when reading through the *BSNs*, that our latest light will be reflected in our latest issues.

Victory

Our lead article in this issue is on the precious subject of *victory*. Christendom is filled with much defeat and failure. What a joy to know that we need not seek for victory, for it is already ours in Christ!

Why This Waste

It was as a teenager that I first had the opportunity to read Watchman Nee’s stirring work, “*Why This Waste?*”. This article has been a continual source of comfort to my heart over the years. In every transition that I have ever made, there have been those whose response was “What a shame Clyde has gone off the deep end. What a waste!” Even to this day, I hear this from dear, and sincere saints. Maybe you too have faced this in your walk with the Lord. If so, we trust that this article will minister encouragement to your heart, as it has ours!

Yours in the bonds of His love and service,



Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Bible Student’s Notebook™

ISSN: 1936-9360

No. 60 – January, 2003

This biweekly publication (24 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God’s abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7)
- the affirmation of God’s purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11)
- the “preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began” (Romans 16:25)
- true freedom and liberty apart from the law (Galatians 5:1)
- the organic nature of the church, the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12)
- the distinct ministry of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 11:13)
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15)
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13).
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with ...
 - total forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:14)
 - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6)
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4)

This publication is a joint effort of a few members of the body of Christ. It is a product of our individual lives and ministries together. We do not claim infallibility for its contents. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any “Movement,” “Organization,” “Mission,” or separate body of believers, but is sent forth to and for all “saints.”

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U.S.: 6 months (12 issues) - \$24⁰⁰; 1 year (24 issues) - \$42⁰⁰; 2 years (48 issues) - \$72⁰⁰; 3 years (72 issues) - \$90⁰⁰;
Foreign: 1 year (24 issues) - \$60⁰⁰;

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(recompiled and edited)

grace or gift which He grants to certain ones who learn some principles of spiritual warfare.

People are looking for a technique or method by which they may work out a victory on behalf of Christ. Not surprisingly everyone has their own way of waging warfare. Some emphasize intercessory prayer, and believe the secret is in getting hundreds of people praying for the same thing. Others lean towards praise and worship. Some stress binding and loosing. Others believe the key is in locating and naming certain spirits which supposedly control different parts of the world. Still others think there must be some prophetic act to be performed or declaration to be made.

Here is the problem with virtually all of these things: they are just that – THINGS – methods, techniques, teachings, strategies, but they are not Christ. Victory is not this, that, or the other. It is not some spiritual thing. Victory is the God-Man. The one in Christ is seated with Him in the heavenly places. If we see ourselves in Him, then we cannot help but understand that since the battle is already won and Victory is ours, then we do not need a method or a technique designed to “get” a victory which we already possess.

The problem with a spiritual warfare “method” is it deceives us into thinking we have something with which we may overcome the enemy. We do not. If yours is a “method,” then the method will fail. There are no methods for Salvation, for Christ is the Way. He does not show us the way, He is the Way. Similarly, Christ is not present with us in order to show us a way to victory. He is Victory. If we have any hope of overcoming by taking a little piece of Christ and incorporating it into our spiritual warfare program then we have failed before we have begun.

We must realize that our grounds and basis for victory is Christ. The many schemes, plans, formulas, and strategies that we devise in order to gain some sort of advantage over the enemy are but wood, hay, and stubble. Why do we seek such methods? Because we have not seen ourselves seated with Christ in the heavenly realm.

WINNING THE WAR BUT LOSING THE BATTLE

Let us look at some spiritual warfare methods. There is a distinction amongst these methods, that is, darkness is glorified, darkness is talked about, darkness is exalted. Such teachings are, for the most part, enemy-oriented. Where is the revelation of Christ? It is not to be found. Instead, we are often told to seek revelation into Satan, the demons, the works of darkness, and how we may overcome them.

For instance, we have been told that we must discern the names of the principalities and powers over certain areas in order to bind, rebuke, and cast them out. How does this method glorify darkness? It does it by getting people to seek revelation into other “things” apart from Christ. When we engage in this pursuit we are no longer praying for the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, we are instead praying for the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Satan. Since God does not reveal anything to us apart from His Son, then from whence comes the “revelation” of Satan?

As Christians we use a lot of spiritual phraseology without understanding what it really means. For instance, we say, “The battle is already won.” What does this mean? If we take it for what it says, it means that there is no fighting left to do, and we are already victorious. It means either victory has been handed to us, or we have already fought the battle and won. Both of these have, in fact, been done for us in Christ. We have been handed a victory, and we have also already fought a battle in which we obtained the victory. On the one hand, we did nothing at all for it, and on the other hand we have already fought the battle: yet not we ourselves, but through Christ. Since Christ overcomes, and I am in Him, I have overcome as though I fought the battle myself.

This ought to be good news to us, but for the most part our Christian experience is more along of the lines of winning the war but losing the battle. Some have accepted this situation as inevitable so long as they live on the earth. They do not

see victory on this side of heaven. They want to believe that Christ has really overcome the devil and destroyed all the works of the enemy, but then they look at their own failures and defeats and wonder why they are losing the battles if they have already won the war. Well, that is a good question. Here is another question to consider: if the war is already won, why are we still fighting battles at all? Why wrestle when we can stand?

Can you see the difference between wrestling for a victory that I do not have, and standing in a Victory that is mine already? How can we see the difference in our experience? It is quite easy to mark where we are and see if we are living and walking in the truth. When we fight according to the flesh we have no choice but to wrestle; but when the enemy is spiritual, we wrestle by STANDING, not by fighting.

If I see victory as something that I have to wrestle the devil for then I will be under great stress of spirit, soul, and body, looking for the devil under every rock and in every dark corner. At the slightest discomfort or annoyance I will presume the adversary is out to get me again. I will become obsessed with darkness, demons, and devils. The more you swat at a hornet the more likely you are to be stung. Then sure enough, the more attention I pay to the devil, the more diligent he is to harass me.

I will experience lots of failures and very few victories. Whatever victory I do experience is fleeting and brief. Just when I think I have bound the devil he gets loosed again, and I am in for yet another round. Around and around we go. He goes, and comes, and goes, and comes. I resist, he flees, and comes again. My dreams bother me by night and flashing thoughts disturb me by day. Since I am fighting the devil I have to take time out to "come against" every single thought. I have to answer every single accusation. The tiniest temptations become huge weights. I have little joy, no peace, no real confidence. Only fear: fear of failing, fear of giving ground to the devil, fear of what he might throw at me next.

This is what many people call spiritual warfare. It is not. What I have described is wrestling as a flesh and blood person who is following flesh and

blood rules. For ...

VICTORY IS A MAN, NOT A METHOD

Victory is not a thing, but a Person; ... Victory is not an experience, but a Man; ... God does not give me a thing called victory, but has given me His Son in the place of victory in order to be my Victory. Then Victory will never be future-tense and far-away, but Ever Present and Now; for Victory is Christ, and Victory lives within you. Thus, Victory has nothing to do with the devil, and everything to do with Christ. Since most Christians have more faith, assurance and reverence for the devil than they do for the Lord Jesus, it is easy to see why so many are defeated. ...

"And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all ... But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 1:19-23; 2:4-6).

Together, together, together, together ...

TOGETHER we were raised from the dead, TOGETHER we were set at the right hand of God in the heavenlies, TOGETHER we were seated far above ALL principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named! ... What is there left for me to do now that I am far above all these things? What is left for me to fight? I can find nothing to do now except to simply abide in Christ and allow Him to be my Victory,

(continued on page 676)

Jury Duty

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Not long after finishing our series of articles on *Human Government* in the *Bible Student's Notebook* (issues #38 – #44) we received a letter and questionnaire regarding jury duty from our local Jury Commissioners. We thought that our letter of response and explanation might be of some help and encouragement to those of you who found yourselves in harmony with our conclusions. We have decided that re-publishing this letter may provide an adequate follow-up to our *Human Government* series. Here is the letter in its entirety.

CLYDE L. PILKINGTON, JR.
111 Charity Lane
Gladstone VA 24553
November 22, 2000

Jury Commissioners
Amherst County
PO Box 462
Amherst, VA 24521

Dear Honorable Sirs:

I feel that a letter of explanation is in order to accompany the attached questionnaire.

First, I would like to explain the reason for my delay in responding.

The address that you have is my former one. We have moved to the corrected address on the questionnaire.

Second, I would like to explain the dilemma that I find myself in.

Upon moving to Amherst County in 1996 I registered to vote. But as you may be able to tell from voting records that I never have exercised that function. This is due to personal convictions that have developed. I have come to believe that I, as a citizen of heaven (Philippians 3:20), have a conflict of interest when it comes to voting and other "decision" making processes that relate to government.

Let me be clear that I am not opposed in any fashion to human government. I believe that human government is ordained of God and that you and other government servants are indeed "ministers of God" (Romans 13:4), and that you have the full right not to bear the "sword in vain." So, the conflict that I have does not come from the rightful role of government.

Instead my conflict comes from my own role as a member of Christ's Body (I Corinthians 12:13) and an ambassador of Jesus Christ (II Corinthians 5:20). I find that the principles that guide me as a member of Christ's Body place me in direct conflict with the principles (equally divinely appointed) of human government. God has called me to "recompense no man evil for evil" (Romans 12:17), and thus to a ministry of "grace" (Ephesians 3:2), and "forgiveness" (Ephesians 4:23).

I suppose one of the best ways to explain this conflict to you is by means of the commonly used phrase, "the separation of church and state." I have come to see and understand that as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ I am the church. Paul, the apostle defines the church as the Body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22, 23). As a member of His body I am – along with all other believers – the church. And I believe that there is a clear line of separation between church and state. I believe that I have a distinct role to fulfill, as does the state. Therefore, since I believe that my role "in Christ's stead" (II Corinthians 5:20) is one of "grace" and "forgiveness" I believe that I have strong conflicts of interest that would disqualify me from serving as a juror.

I do not mean to imply that I would not serve. In fact, I would find no difficulty in simple decisions of right and wrong (I Corinthians 6:2). But there would be clear conflicts of interest as to the response of "grace" and "forgiveness."

Since coming to this understanding, I have written extensively concerning the role of a believer in Christ in relationship to human government. These

(continued on page 674)

Why This Waste?

by – Watchman Nee

"And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head. And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her. And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whosoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. She hath done what she could: she is come beforehand to anoint my body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her" (Mark 14:3-9).

The Lord ordained that the story of Mary anointing Him with the costly ointment should always accompany the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom. We know the story well. Judging by the story in connection with her brother's resurrection, we know that the family was not an especially wealthy one. The sisters had to work in the house themselves, and one of them, Mary, had an alabaster box with three hundred pence worth of ointment in it, and with a stroke she broke it and poured the whole of that costly nard upon the head of the Lord. According to human reasoning it was altogether too much, even for the Lord. That is why Judas took the lead with the other disciples in thinking that Mary was wasting something (John 12:4-5).

Now we come to the word waste. What is waste? Waste simply means giving too much. If a shilling will do and you give a pound, it is waste. If two ounces will do and you give a kilogram, it is a waste. A waste means that you give something too much for something too little. A waste means that the one who is receiving the something is not worth so much. Yet we are dealing here with something the Lord said was to go out with the gospel of the kingdom, wherever it would be preached. With the preaching of the gospel the

Lord is out to have a result that corresponds with Mary's action here: that is, for people to come out and "waste" themselves on Him. That is what He is after.

Now we must look at the question from two angles, that of Judas, and that of the other disciples. They all thought it to be a waste. To Judas, who had never called our Lord the Lord, everything that was poured upon Him was waste. Even water would have been waste. To the world, the service of the Lord, and our giving of ourselves to Him is pure waste. "Such and such a man would have made good in the world if he were not a Christian," is a sentiment that is frequently expressed. For anyone with natural talents to be a Christian, to serve the Lord, is deemed to be pure waste.

So thought Judas, "We could manage better with the money; we could give it to charity; we could do some social service, we could help people in a more practical way. Why pour it down at the feet of Jesus? As to yourself, can you not find a better employment of your life?" That is what Judas was thinking, and that is what the world is thinking. It is too much to give yourself to the Lord! But no! When once our eyes have been opened to the worth of the Lord, nothing is too good for Him.

But it is upon the reaction of the other disciples that I want most to dwell; for they affect us more than does Judas. We do not mind very much what the world is saying, but we do mind what those other disciples are saying who ought to have understood, yet did not. We mark that they said the same thing as Judas; and not only so, but they were moved to indignation, saying, "To what purpose is this waste?" (Matthew 26:8).

Now here is the whole question of waste, and of what the Lord is after. Today, even amongst Christians, there can be found much of that spirit that wants to give as little as possible to the Lord, and yet to get as much as possible from Him. The prevailing thought today is of being used, as though that were the one thing that mattered. That my little rubber band should be stretched to the very limit seems all important. But this is not the Lord's mind. The Lord wants us to be used, yes; but what He is after is that we pour all we have, ourselves, to Him, and if that be all, that is enough. It is not a question of whether the poor have been helped or not, but of whether the Lord has been satisfied.

The question is not one of working for Him, my friends, but of service to Him, of ministering to the Lord. That is what He is after; that I should give Him my all, even though people should say, "You are doing nothing!" My service to the Lord is to please Him. There is many a meeting we might take, many a convention at which we might speak, many a campaign in which we might share, but this is not the first consideration. That my usefulness should be brought to the full is not what the Lord is after, but His concern is rather with my position at His feet and my anointing of His head. What I have as an alabaster box, the most precious thing, my whole life. I give it all up to the Lord. It seems as if it is a waste, but that is what He is after.

May I tell you something? One thing some of us have come to learn is that in the divine service the principle of "waste" is the principle of power, whereas the principle of "usefulness" is the very principle of scattering. The real usefulness in the hand of the Lord is "waste." The more you think

you could do, the more you employ your gifts to the very limit -- and perhaps beyond the limit -- that you will find to be the principle of the world, and not the principle of the Lord.

I knew a saint of the Lord, now in His presence, who was very greatly used of Him. But my first concern was that he did not seem to be being used. Every time I said to myself, why did he not get out and take some meetings, get somewhere, do something? It was a waste to live in a small village without anything happening. Sometimes when I went to see him, I almost shouted at him: "No one knows the Lord as you do. You know the Book in a most living way. Do you not see the need all around you? Why don't you do something? It is a waste of time, a waste of energy, a waste of money, a waste of everything, just sitting here and doing nothing!"

But he was the one who helped me most of all. The highest thing is not just to be moving about. I do not mean to say that we are going to do nothing, but the first thing is the Lord Himself, not the work. That is what He is after.

So the Lord said, "*Let her alone; why trouble ye her? She hath wrought a good work on Me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whosoever ye will ye may do them good: but Me ye have not always*" (Mark 14:6-7). The whole point is, what am I going to do to the Lord today? Did those other women who came with their spices to the tomb succeed in anointing the Lord's body? No! He was risen. Only one succeeded, Mary, who anointed Him beforehand. It seems as if man will say I am wasting my time – but Lord, nothing is too good for Thee! He is worthy to be served. He is worthy for me just to be His prisoner. He is worthy for me just to live for Him. Let others say what they will. Have our eyes been opened to see that working for the poor, working for the benefit of the world, working for the eternal welfare of the sinner, as things in themselves, are not to be compared with the work we do to the Lord, with our being just for Him. What is your estimate of the Lord?

Then the Lord said, "She hath done what she

could" (Mark 14:8). It means that Mary had given her all. That was all she could do, no more; and she did it. The Lord will not be satisfied with anything less. The whole point is a life really laid down at the feet of the Lord, and that in view of His death, His burial; that is, in view of a future day. Then it was His burial, now it is His crowning day that is in view. He will be acclaimed by all in that day, but how precious, far more precious to Him it is that we should anoint Him now; not with any material oil, but with that which is deepest and, maybe, hard for us to break. The Lord get anointing from us today!

Further, the Lord said, "Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her" (Matthew 26:3). Why? Because the gospel is meant to produce this. The gospel is not primarily for the satisfaction of sinners. The gospel is preached that everything may be to the satisfaction of the Son of God. Not to sinners first of all, though, praise God, sinners will be satisfied. But supremely it is Christ who must find satisfaction through its preaching.

Once more let me repeat. The whole question for us is simply this: It seems that I am giving too much for too little. That is waste. Others appear to far better advantage than I, though they have given up none of the things that I have. As for me, I seem to meet with all the difficulties. Continual trial and suffering is what comes my way.

Now, am I not wasting my time? If I consecrate myself enough for the blessing, but not enough for the trouble; if I consecrate myself enough for the Lord to use me, but not enough for the Lord to shut me up, it will be all right! Are we not found thinking thus at times? But the principle of waste is that which satisfies the heart of the Lord Jesus. You can get something for yourself out of your consecration, but often real satisfaction can only come to the heart of your Lord when you seem to be "wasting" yourself on the Lord, giving too much and getting nothing back for yourself.

O friends, what are we after? Are we after mere usefulness, as those disciples were? They wanted

to make every penny of that three hundred pence go to its full length. They wanted to be used themselves. If only we can please Him, surely that should be enough.

Now the breaking of the alabaster box and the anointing of the Lord filled the house with the odor, with the sweetest odor. Everyone could smell it. Whenever you meet someone who has really suffered; been limited, gone through things for the Lord, willing to be imprisoned by the Lord, just being satisfied with Him and nothing else, immediately you scent the fragrance. There is a savor of the Lord. Something has been crushed, something has been broken, and there is a resulting odor of sweetness. The odor which filled the house that day still fills the Church; Mary's fragrance never passes away.

Friends, we cannot produce impressions of God upon others, impart the sense of the presence of God, without the breaking of everything, even the most precious things, at the feet of the Lord Jesus. The Lord would have us here, not first of all to preach or to do work for Him, but to create hunger in others. No true work will begin in any life apart from a sense of need. We cannot inject that into others, we cannot drive people to be hungry for God. Such hunger can be created only by those whose lives convey vital impressions of Him.

Oh, to be wasted! It is a blessed thing to be wasted for the Lord. So many of us who have been prominent in the Christian world know nothing of this. Many of us have been used to the full – have been used, I would say, too much – but we do know what it means to be wasted on God. We like to be always "on the go;" the Lord would sometimes prefer to have us in prison. We think in terms of apostolic journeys: God dares to put His greatest ambassadors in chains.

"Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place" (II Corinthians 2:14).



The Blood in Relation to Repentance, Forgiveness, Acceptance and Fellowship

by – C.I. Scofield (edited and abridged)

"To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved. In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace"
(Ephesians 1:6-7).

The blood is always stated in Scripture to be the ground of our forgiveness. Perhaps I stand alone in that, but I certainly grew up thinking repentance was the ground of forgiveness. I thought that if I repented hard enough, and I understood repentance to mean feeling very bad about my sins, if I was sorry enough, in other words, for having sinned, that then I should be forgiven.

I was greatly surprised when I began to study the Bible to find that it was not my repentance nor anything else in me, that was the background of my forgiveness, but the blood of Christ that enables God, in Paul's phrase, to be "*just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus*" (Romans 3:26). We think the problem is for us to reconcile the justice and equity of God with the condemnation of a sinner; but the problem up yonder, dear friends, is exactly reversed. It is in heaven's view how to find a way that God can be just and justify a sinner. It is perfectly simple that God can be just and condemn sinners; but how can God be just and justify sinners? The blood of Christ is the answer. The ground of our forgiveness and the ground of justification is being "*justified by His blood*" (Romans 5:9). We are justified by our faith instrumentally (Romans 3:28; Romans 5:1). Faith lays hold upon this.

Then again the blood – and the blood only – is the ground of our peace (Colossians 1:20). We speak sometimes of making peace with God. We cannot make peace with God. Peace is made by

God, and peace is made by the blood of Christ, who did all that was necessary to make peace, and when we believe we enter into a peace which already exists.

When I was a boy I was a soldier in the Confederate army, and there came a time when the army of Northern Virginia was surrendered by our General to General Grant, the commander of the Union forces. General Lee and General Grant met together and arranged the terms upon which every one of us might enter into perfect peace with the United States Government, and we were very glad to do it. Now I did not have to hunt up General Grant, and make a little separate treaty for myself. I did not see him until long years after that at all. The two Generals made the terms, and we accepted them.

Jesus Christ made peace by the blood of His cross. A peace is made, an eternal peace that never can be destroyed, and a sinner enters upon it by an act of faith ...

How nigh are we made? "Accepted in the Beloved!" Think of it! The very moment that a sinner believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, that is his position. Instantly made nigh by the blood. How can that ever be improved upon by anything we can do, or by any change of locality on our part? Could I ever be any nearer to God than accepted in His Son? If I could, then by so much I would displace Christ. If I can be nearer to Him than His Son Jesus Christ, then I can be nearer than Christ,

and I push Christ back by so much. God forbid the thought!

But we are always trying to do something, or to feel something, or to come into some experience which shall make us nearer to God, instead of resting right back on the work of Christ which is finished – the blood that makes us nigh.

I remember years ago I heard a minister in what was intended to be a revival meeting begin a prayer in this way, “Oh Lord, from our great and guilty distance we venture to call upon Thy holy name,” and I thought to myself, is the man converted, and

if he isn’t converted, why is he leading prayer in a meeting like this, and if he is converted does he know that he is made nigh by the blood of Christ? Does he not know that a converted man, received in the Beloved, is not at a great and guilty distance from God. He is right in the very heart of God, and that from the very moment when he believes. The blood is also the basis of Christian fellowship elsewhere. You have that in I Corinthians 10:16, “*The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?*”

Where Faith Sees Christ

Paul’s Need to Read

by – Martin Zender

Cook at Paul, the apostle sitting in his Roman prison. What a career. This man has seen the risen Christ. He has been graciously granted a glimpse into the third heaven. He has heard ineffable declarations of God. He has suffered for the sake of God like no other, save the Lord Himself. As the apostle to the nations, he has inaugurated a new era of grace. He has completed the revelation of God, meaning that he has written the better part of the Greek Scriptures.

Old man Paul. Mr. Scripture. He is suffering now in a Roman prison, the crown of his career. It has been graciously granted him to be counted worthy to suffer shame for the sake of the gospel and for the sake of his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Now this champion of faith is going to write one more

(continued from page 669)

writings have been published in a periodical called *the Bible Student’s Notebook*™ (a publication that has been in circulation for twelve years). I would be glad to submit the past issues that cover this topic if they would be of any further help in this process.

I look forward to hearing from you on this matter.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

letter, to his friend Timothy. Here were among the last words of the greatest apostle who ever lived:

“The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments” (II Timothy 4:13).

He has seen the risen Lord ... yet he wants his books. He has seen the third heaven ... yet he wants his books. He had heard the declarations of God ... yet he wants his books. He has written the better part of the Greek Scriptures ... yet he wants his books.

Our conclusion is modest yet profound: Even a great apostle needs to read. ■

Reminded of my privilege of keeping you in my prayers (I Timothy 2:1, 2),

I am sincerely yours,

Clyde L Pilkington, Jr.

We never did receive a response from the Jury Commissioners to our letter. Neither were we ever summoned for jury duty. ■

Alabaster Boxes

by – B.B. Winston

She brought the alabaster box
Where Jesus sat at meat;
And kneeling down, she poured
the oil
Of spikenard on His feet.

Upon those weary, tired feet,
Beneath the angry stare
Of hypocrites and Pharisees,
And wiped them with her hair.

And what a rich reward was
hers,
Surpassing gems or gold;
Where'er the gospel has been
preached
Her story has been told.

The story of a matchless love,
Poured out like water clear –
Too eager to be kept for self,
Too strong for foolish fear.



Letters to the Editor

“I continue to enjoy the *BSN*. It really ministers to my heart, brother! It also challenges preconceived ideas. It’s amazing to realize how much the religious system affects even those who claim they are not a part of it. I know I am.” **IL**

“I got the latest *BSN* [#59] you sent. Thanks! I think the article you wrote about family matters is a wonderful one...” **HI**

“I really enjoy the *BSN* [#59] I particularly enjoyed the one on ‘Christian Individualism.’ I read it over and over again.” **VA**

“An outstanding *BSN* [#59]!” **PA**

“I wish to receive the *BSN*. I have enclosed a check for the subscription price. I read ‘Christian Individualism’ in issue #59, and needed to hear what Otis Q. Sellers had to say. It helped me get over a rough experience.” **SC**

“I loved the article on ‘Christian Individualism’ [*BSN* #59]!” *E-mail*

“The article ‘Christian Individualism’ in issue #59 of the *BSN* is such a blessing to me. Having chosen, after reading the Word of God – Paul’s epistles to the Body of Christ, to remove myself from all organized churches – so called. I have been misunderstood, constantly as I chat with believers of Jesus Christ I would be peppered with, ‘Do not forsake the assembling of yourself,’ etc., etc. But as I read the context of the verses in Hebrews 10:25, there is nothing mentioned about church gatherings. Many think I am not a believer because I do not go to a building on Sundays to worship and on and on ... What an article that blessed my heart! Thanks very much!” **FL**

(continued from page 668)

just as I allow Him to be my Salvation. ...

CHRIST IS REST FROM OUR LABOR

We may "stand therefore" (Ephesians 6:14) only when we have learned to sit with Christ, that it is more about rest and faith, and less about fighting and struggling. ... Oh the inconsistency of claiming Christ as my "victory," or even asking Christ to give me the "victory," and then battling my way through life as if I still had to do something to earn it – because if Victory is MINE, then there is nothing left to do but praise God for it and live out of it.

There is no higher place in the universe than to be seated with Christ in the heavenly places. Indeed, since Christ is larger than the universe, then to be seated with Christ is to be above and beyond all time and space and dimension as we know it. To be seated with Christ is to overcome as He has overcome. It is entering into His victory. It is not a fight to obtain victory, but a sitting down having already been made victorious. It is rest, but it is not "rest" in the sense that we do nothing. It means we have rested from our labors and now we work according to His power which works in us and through us.

God does not give us victory, God places us into Christ as our Victory. Since we are one with Him, it is nevermore a question of our ability, gifts, talents, or power. Everything we ARE is swallowed up and eclipsed and surpassed by everything HE IS. Today, in Christ, I overcome: but not because I am anything. On the contrary I am nothing; but since I am in Christ, Who is God's Everything, His overcoming is my overcoming. If the Head overcomes, so does the Body which is joined to the Head. ... Can you see this? Take the weakest member and put it in union with the Head and they will go the way the Head goes. ...

When we begin looking to the Son as the Sum of All Things then we are giving Christ the preeminence. We are entering into the very heart, mind, thought, intent, purpose, and plan of God – that Christ Himself would fill all things, that His glory would be reflected in all things. If our way is a method, then the method gets the attention, and the man who created the method gets the credit, and the people who put the method into practice get the glory. Thus if my "method" is Christ, then Christ gets all the attention, Christ gets all the credit, and Christ gets all the glory. In this way Christ is magnified, the heart of God is satisfied, and we ourselves are attuned to His Will in Christ. ■

Your Part

Now that you have read this issue of the Bible Student's Notebook™, it's your turn.

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