

*ONE MAN'S
OBEDIENCE*

**A STUDY IN THE OBEDIENCE
OF CHRIST FOR US**

ONE MAN'S OBEDIENCE

Father we thank You for Jesus. We thank you that we are not here as the product of our own experiment, but we are here as *the product of Your achievement in Christ Jesus*. We thank You that we are no longer partaking of a fleeting joy, a fleeting experience that the senses can only capture for a moment. I thank You for *an unfailing permanent glory* that You have brought us into through the knowledge of Your grace and truth. We rejoice exceedingly in You Father and we praise You in Jesus' name. Amen!

The most glorious thing man could ever encounter is to witness the revelation of God Himself to man. The most glorious experience that man could ever experience, is to stand in *an equal relationship with God* where we can share His glory and shine with His glory. We have to come to the discovery that the Word in us is an adequate vehicle to reveal all the splendour and all the majesty that can be known of God in the incarnation, in the Word made flesh!

Man always seeks to secure meaningful friendship in his life. There is always that hunger in man's heart to see a friendship as a lasting one, a friendship that has in it a guarantee that *cannot be interfered with*. Man has sought religiously to give definition to his idea of friendship with God. But too often he has found himself frustrated again and again in his failure to see a sustained blamelessness in his experience. The beauty in the Word is our discovery of the PERFECT LAW OF LIBERTY. It is a

discovery of a law that perfectly liberates man into a blameless position before God. It liberates us into a position of such integrity that no amount of contradiction can effectively challenge what God has initiated, accomplished and perfected in Christ Jesus on our behalf.

In our study of the Scriptures we are not dealing with a vague definition of what redemption has brought to man, a vague definition of what man can perhaps hope to attain to in the life hereafter. *We are dealing with an accurate, vivid, visible revelation of a redemption that qualifies man for God.* A redemption that would NOT DISAPPOINT GOD. We have allowed ourselves to become so intimidated and so influenced by man's experience and man's failure to show any consistency in his conduct, that we began to allow ourselves to believe in a lesser life than what the Word reveals! We have allowed ourselves to accept the standard of human experience above the revelation of the standard and life quality that Jesus reveals. Faith gives us the greatest privilege to tap into a reality of far greater quality, value and steadfastness than what your experience can offer you. Faith gives man the privilege to encounter the very life that *God saw for man in his original design!*

When Paul speaks of his ministry, he says the following in II Cor.3:1-2 (RSV) - "We are not trying to commend ourselves according to human standards. Are we beginning to commend ourselves again or do we need as some do, *letters of recommendation* to you, or from you? You yourselves are our letter of recommendation written on your hearts to be known and read by all men." Paul only sees one strategy for world evangelisation. Paul

does not see the world persuaded through a religious statement or through some kind of philosophy. He sees men persuaded through a LIVING EPISTLE known and read by all men.

God has the ability to communicate to any language group. God has the ability to communicate in such a way, that it leaves man without any excuse to continue to ignore God in his own indifference. God's love did not allow Him to remain invisible. He has overlooked the times of ignorance. He has come to manifest Himself accurately in the incarnation. His Word became flesh, so that man may *behold a Man (Christ) as in a mirror*, and not some kind of weird philosophy, some kind of wonderful blessing about deity and about the character and nature of God. Man no longer needed to find himself guessing about the nature of his faith in terms of his own competence. God gave an accurate definition of Himself in His Son, in a Man, so that that definition could become the testimony of God confirmed in the flesh. God manifested Himself absolutely clearly, so that you can clearly behold your identity in the mirror Christ Jesus.

Paul realised that the impact of the Word is found in a living epistle - A TRANSFORMED LIFE. It is not only seen in being a blessed people, an encouraged people, but in a transformed life! II Cor.3:3-5 - "You are a letter from Christ, delivered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God. Not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts. *Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God.* Not that we are competent of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us." Our competence is from God, who has made us. I love the Scriptures that emphasise the fact that "GOD

HAS MADE US", that we are the product of His design and of His ability, of His initiative - "OF GOD ARE YOU IN CHRIST".

People often ask, "where do you get all this from?" I love to refer people to II Cor.5:18 where it says "*All this is from God, who reconciled us in Christ Jesus, who has made us competent to be ministers of a New Covenant*". What is the basis of ministry competence? Where do we find a guarantee to ministry competence? Do we find it in our own experience in praying for the sick and hopefully some of them will get healed? Where do we find a basis for ministry competence? "Such is the confidence that we have through Christ towards God. Not that we are competent of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, *but our competence is from God, who has made us competent to be ministers of a New Covenant, not in a written code, but in the Spirit.*" He has made and declared us as sufficient ministers according to His capacity in our spirit.

Paul speaks in II Cor.3:9 of the "ministry of righteousness". He speaks of how this ministry introduces to man a "permanent glory". It is an experience of glory that takes him beyond the boundaries and the limits of what his senses could enjoy. Man's senses could capture any experience for a moment, then store it in his memory bank and somehow through his memory he would seek to qualify his experience. But God knows that the heart hunger of man is for *an experience beyond season*, beyond that which fades again. When God initiated this friendship that He had in mind in the beginning before time was, He initiated this friendship, this work of redemption in such a way, in such

excellence, that God restored the human race to Himself in a place of permanent glory.

In II Cor.3:15 it says that "whenever Moses is read there is a veil that lies over the minds of men". It speaks of how the law limits man in his approach to God. The law reveals to man his condition as a fallen creature. The Law reveals how Satan's work in Adam brought the whole human race into bondage. The Law reveals sin - Rom.3:20, 7:7. It says in Rom.5:14 - "From Adam to Moses death reigned, even though sin was not counted". There was no standard by which man could measure his condition, but when the Law came, sin awoke within him. Sin was aroused within him by the Law! - Rom.7:5. So a veil continues to limit man in his approach to God, until a man turns to Christ and he sees in Christ another law - THE LAW OF IDENTIFICATION - *the law of the life quality God yearns for man to enjoy, expressed and exhibited in His Son!*

It says in II Cor.3:18 - "We all with unveiled faces, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord are being changed into His likeness". Not changed into something inferior, but INTO HIS LIKENESS, from glory to glory, for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. II Cor.4:1 - "Therefore having this ministry by the mercy of God, we DO NOT LOSE HEART!" Just concentrate on this - *The devil does not have what it takes to make you miserable enough for you to quit!* Paul says in this verse that he is having this ministry *by the mercy of God*. The mercy of God is what God has revealed in His Son on man's behalf through His Son's obedience.

The reference to our ministry is not some letter of recommendation from man. It is not some encouragement of man, but it is *our tapping into what God revealed in Christ on man's behalf*. It is how God successfully broke through that veil that separated man from God. It is how God broke through the power of the law of sin and death *to release mankind unto Himself*. He says this is the basis of our ministry competence. This is why we refuse to lose heart, because it is a well-done gospel and reality.

In II Cor.1:7 it says "*Our hope for you is unshaken!* (steadfast)". Paul does not see enough contradiction to unsettle him in his confidence concerning people. Either we have to deceive ourselves and just hopefully look away from the negative and try to look at the positive, or we must tap into the truth. We must tap into a truth that is of greater weight, greater integrity than any theory based upon man's experience. We have so easily allowed ourselves to be distracted through an experience that *does not line up with what the Word reveals!* We have so easily adjusted our theology to accommodate the concept of the positional and the experiential, only to excuse and justify the failure of our experience by saying: "Well at least positional we are the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus!" (Positional means the way God looks at us). It is then as if God has developed the ability to so deceive Himself that He just looks at Jesus and thus He excuses man's failure! By no means! God has given us a gospel that is not leaving us in shame when it is coming to the experience - Rom.1:16. God has given us everything in the gospel that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue - II Pet.1:3.

God wants us to discover that the experience exhibited in Christ has become *our qualification*. He has qualified us not in terms of our own experience, but he has qualified us in terms of His Son's obedience. The Gospel of Jesus Christ reveals another Law. It is called "THE LAW OF FAITH, THE LAW OF LIBERTY, THE LAW OF THE SPIRIT AND LIFE". It is a liberty that cannot be contradicted. The fruit of this liberty becomes so evident that no law can stand against it. Praise God!

We have so reluctantly taught young believers to somehow accommodate in their concept the idea of "listen you will just have to adjust to all kinds of temptations and failures, and you will just have to put up with it as the pattern for your life", as if the Cross was a failure. If so, we might as well have remained with the Old Covenant. If it is not possible for the blood of Jesus Christ to secure a better redemption, based upon better promises, then WHY DID HE DIE? Should we not once again put ourselves outside of the effect of His grace and again submit to the yoke of bondage? Shall we then again submit to the yoke of our own effort? The law limits man to his own effort - to his own ability to succeed, to his own ability to achieve, but the LAW OF FAITH releases you into the achievement of Christ! - Rom.3:27.

"We do not lose heart, because we have renounced disgraceful underhand ways." Why would man submit to disgraceful underhanded ways? It says we refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's Word. Why would man tamper with God's Word? Because man has somehow found himself embarrassed in his own experience, and he must constantly adjust his

interpretation and his theology *to accommodate his experience! We have come to such a place of persuasion in the achievement of Christ* - into such a place of turning to the Lord and viewing Him, no longer as in a museum, something historic, something that has faded, **BUT AS IN A MIRROR. THE VERY REFLECTION OF OUR OWN IDENTITY!** We have come to such a place of persuasion that we refuse to practise cunning or to tamper with God's Word. To tamper with God's Word is to try and squeeze God and His Word into the mould of our experience and to reduce what God revealed in Christ to a concept of a lower worth.

Paul says "but by the open statement of the TRUTH, we would commend ourselves to every man's conscience". At the end of his book to the Corinthians, Paul says that even if he is weighed in their opinion, in their judgement and found to have failed them, even if they can list the wrongs which they have picked up in his conduct, then still they can **DO NOTHING AGAINST THE TRUTH!** - II Cor.13:8. To make a list of another man's failure, does not change the success of the cross concerning his life. *Do not use another man's failure as an excuse* for you to question the truth that God exhibited in the person of His Son Jesus Christ concerning your life.

Theories always need to be adjusted. Man always has to adjust his theories based upon his sense knowledge experience. E.W.Kenyon says that man has never yet produced any manual, a scientific manual or a mathematical manual, that outlived one generation. **TRUTH NEEDS NO ADJUSTMENT!!** There is an authority in the Word of truth that separates you from the evil that is in the world. Jesus said: "Father, I do not pray

that you take them out of the world, but I pray that you separate them from the Evil one. Sanctify them by the truth. Thy Word is the truth!" - John 17:15-17. Jesus has much more, infinitely more, confidence in *the effect of truth upon the spirit of man to renew and release his mind from the rule of the senses*, than he has hesitation about the fact that man might or might not make it.

Paul writes to the Galatians (5:7-10) and says "You were running well. Who has hindered you from being *persuaded by the truth?*" Who has brought you another gospel that has stolen your persuasion about the truth? The truth is that man has been liberated in Christ Jesus. In the man Christ Jesus, the whole human race was redeemed! That is the truth. "If you continue in my words, you will know the truth and the truth will set you free" - John 8:31-32. Your liberty is not the product of your own experiments. No trial and error and correction. Your liberty is the product of TRUTH REVEALED, the truth that establishes the fact of your release. *Side with God's interpretation of the cross and in the light of any contradiction prefer the TRUTH.* Paul says, "And what shall we say? Shall we continue to sin so that grace may abound?" He says: "By no means. How can we who have died to sin still continue to live in it?" - Rom.6:1-2. If we can consider *the legality of our union in the death of Christ*, then sin loses its permission to rule in our lives. Sin has no right to rule you any longer because you legally died in Christ Jesus two thousand years ago! If one died, all died! - II Cor.5:15.

In Gal.5:17 Paul writes that "the desires of the flesh and the desires of the Spirit are opposed, so that you do not do the things that you wish." He is speaking of the same

thing in Rom.7, speaking to those who are under the law, seeking to somehow be justified under the law, but soon they find themselves contradicted in their own will, in their own decision and in their own choice. "They choose the good, but they do the wrong". To tackle sin from man's will and man's experience is a lost case. *The reference point where sin lost it's claim upon mankind was in Christ!* Gal.5:24 - "Those who are of Christ have crucified the flesh with its desires and its passions". So if we can consider the legality of our union in the death of Christ, then sin loses it's authority and it's permission in the flesh. What would our redemption be worth if it could not release us in our bodies, if we had to apologise weakly and say: "Well, you know, we are mere men?" Paul is upset in his spirit when he writes to the Corinthians and says: "Why do you continue to behave like ordinary men?" - I Cor.3:3. It is possible as a new-born believer to continue to behave like an ordinary man. Even though it may happen, that does not disqualify the truth!

II Cor.4:2 says - "by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God". Now this is a very bold statement. He says: "By the declared statement of the truth, we would commend ourselves to every man's conscience (by setting forth the truth plainly, we commend ourselves...) in the sight of God." Paul discovered A STANDING BEFORE GOD OF SUCH INNOCENCE, OF SUCH BLAMELESSNESS IN TERMS OF CHRIST REVEALED, AS IN A MIRROR, that he finds the confidence to commend himself to every man's conscience, in the sight of God! He commend himself not as a weak cop-out, but as the most powerful liberty that has come to man. He

says: "even if our gospel is veiled, it is only veiled to those who are perishing." Why would some be perishing? It says in their case that the god of this world has blinded their minds as unbelievers. Satan can only exercise his authority over unbelief - II Cor.4:3-4. Unbelief is the child of ignorance and ignorance has two ingredients -

- A LACK OF KNOWLEDGE
- AND WRONG KNOWLEDGE

Unbelief means to prefer my own effort to justify myself to Christ's achievement. To prefer my own efforts to form my character through human experience, rather than the revelation in the mirror of the Word. Then the enemy comes in and blinds my understanding to perceive Christ, and even though He has been unveiled, He remains veiled to me, because the veil speaks of the inability of the flesh to successfully attain to what God has thought and prepared for me in Christ Jesus. The veil speaks of the DISTANCE that remains, and prevails. Unbelief is to reject God's provision in Christ and to prefer your own efforts. It is to keep from seeing the light of the Gospel.

In Isaiah 60 it speaks of the "substance of the light". It says: "Arise, shine for your light has come". What is the substance of that light? THE GLORY OF THE LORD MADE VISIBLE IN THE FLESH! While Man could think of God's glory as something mysterious, something beyond the reach of his intelligence, something wonderful, as a cloud or a shadow, something glorious in terms of God's provision and his faithfulness. When thinking about God's glory as a thing, then man could have an excuse to misinterpret God. But God has

revealed His glory in the flesh in a living Person or Epistle. Satan is out there to keep them from seeing *the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the likeness of God* - II Cor.4:4.

"For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For it is God who said 'Let light shine out of darkness', who made His light shine into our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ." - II Cor.4:5-6, The very same God who has the reputation that Genesis 1 gives Him, did not shrink from declaring His Word in the midst of thick darkness. It is this God who shines into our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God.

What is that light? It is BEHOLDING HIM AS IN A MIRROR. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God is our union with Christ Jesus, it is *our association in Christ Jesus*. This is the secret to the power of the gospel. The power lies in the revelation of God's righteousness, of the initiative of God to re-instate. The power that will change your life is in seeing God's achievement in His Son. The revelation of that gives definition to the gospel. That is the power of the gospel! It is a gospel that releases man from that which held him captive. It is a revelation of God's righteousness being given to you freely in Christ Jesus.

In Rom.1:5 Paul says that his desire is to communicate the gospel in such a way that it will bring about the "OBEDIENCE OF FAITH" or a faith inspired obedience. Under the law man's contribution was limited to an obedience that the law inspired. In the light of the law

man's obedience became the inconsistent pattern of his own effort. But now the obedience of faith links man to another achievement. It is an obedience that is the spontaneous outflow of the hearing of the faith-persuasion in God's heart concerning the obedience of Jesus in your place.

Rom.5:18 - "Then as one man's trespass led (resulted) to condemnation for ALL MEN, so ONE MAN'S ACT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS LEADS TO ACQUITTAL (in the Greek righteousness) AND LIFE FOR ALL MEN". One Man's righteous act was for all men resulting in justification of life. In Adam all became exceedingly sinful, but they did not know it until the law revealed it. In Christ, all men became exceedingly righteous, exceedingly justified, yet they do not realise it before the preaching of the gospel reveals it to them. Therefore they cannot enter into the benefit of the truth, *until the gospel reveals it*. God did not wait for you to come up to standard through your own ability, through your own exercise of your will and your diligence and your ability to perform, before He justified you. YOU WERE JUSTIFIED IN JESUS' DEATH. He was raised BECAUSE of our justification - Rom.4:25. It would not be possible for God to raise His Son until the just requirement of the Law was fulfilled IN US, NOT BY US! - Rom.8:3. "As one man's trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one man's act of righteousness led to acquittal and life for all men!" The extent of the implication of the gospel is that it includes all men in redemption. God has declared the human race righteous from His side!

Before the fall, before man had done neither good nor bad, God had associated this creature, the human

species, in His Son - Eph.1:4+10. God saw nothing less in the creation of the being called "man" than what He had seen in His Son. Now our entering into the reality of this perfect law of liberty lies in the revelation of how successfully God has already included you in His Son and completed redemption in your spirit! This law needs no adjustment to my inconsistent experience. This perfect law of liberty has everything to do with my PERCEIVING what the Word reveals.

We have said that FAITH NEEDS NO FURTHER REFERENCE THAN WHAT GRACE REVEALS. Grace is everything that Christ did on your behalf through the cross and resurrection. Faith does not need the reference of your experience. Listen carefully! Do not immediately start attacking this statement and say - "Well, it is important for you to bear fruit!" LISTEN! Your experience will disappoint you until you perceive *that there is a greater reality in the truth revealed* that already stood steadfast for the past eternity without your contribution. When you begin to submit to the standard of teaching that truth reveals, it will challenge your conduct. There is no power in the gospel outside of your inclusion in His death. There is no power in the gospel, outside of THE LAW OF IDENTIFICATION.

Paul's gospel was not the mere repetition of the historic evidence of the life and ministry of Jesus, but it was according to the revelation of this mystery in Christ Jesus. What is the mystery? - MAN'S INCLUSION! The mystery is God's wisdom. Why was there a mystery? Because God did not want the enemy to interfere. I Cor.2:7-8 says that if the Devil knew what would happen when Jesus died, he would never have permitted the

Cross. If he understood your inclusion in His death, he would never have allowed the death of Jesus. It was an irreversible mistake of the devil not to have understood the implications of the death of Jesus. The second most disastrous mistake of the Devil WAS TO FAIL TO KEEP THIS KNOWLEDGE FROM YOU. As long as he can keep the knowledge of the truth from you, you will remain captive in your experience. He will exploit your ignorance. He will exploit your unbelief, but when the truth comes you will experience real freedom for "whom the Son sets free, shall be free indeed."

"As one man's trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one man's act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men" - Rom.5:18. There is enough in REDEMPTION TO RELEASE ALL MEN. There is enough in redemption to release you NOW in your personal experience and conduct. There is enough in redemption to secure you in a RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD OF ABSOLUTE BLAMELESS INNOCENCE. "My little children, I am writing this to you so that you *may not sin*, but if anyone does sin you have an Advocate" - I John 2:1-2. But do not use your privilege in Christ to receive acquittal and forgiveness, as an excuse to continue in sin! You cannot walk in the light as He is in the light and keep on sinning. Then you are not practising truth but a lie - I John 1:5-7. What is God's light concerning sin? - "THAT IT IS DEALT WITH IN CHRIST". That is how God sees sin. I John 1:9 and Rom.7:15 has become such a comfortable excuse and escape for a life of failure. It became the favourite Scriptures that the religious world taught. Romans 7:15 - "All the good I want to do, I cannot do" and I John 1:9 - "If I confess my sins God is faithful". Paul is writing that

Scripture to challenge the hypocrite who says he has fellowship with God, but he continues to walk in darkness. He says "Come to the light as God is in the light". It is in His light that we do see the light - Ps.36:9.

What is God's light concerning your forgiveness and freedom? It is His provision for you in Christ. But we say, "Oh Brother! if we confess it and we tell God the details of our sin, that will qualify us for forgiveness", and so we have developed weird and wonderful doctrines around the confession of our sins. As long as you can go back into you pre-natal state and remember even the sins that your forefathers have committed, then maybe you qualify for release? Have the obedience of Jesus not also paid for that? "Jesus why was this man struck blind?" "Was it because of his sin or that of his parents?" - John 9:1-4.

The serpent fastened itself to Paul's hand and immediately religion questioned Paul's integrity whether this man must be a murderer. Justice would not allow him to live - Acts 28:3-6. Then Jesus challenges God's justice from their own newspaper. He says, "Have you heard of the tower that fell over and killed so many people?" He says "Now tell me, were they the worst sinners in town", and God just somehow lined them up and one of the bigger angels pushed the tower over and there they were, those dirty old sinners receiving their just reward. Jesus said, "You will likewise die". Whether you die through a bus that runs you over or a bullet through the head, your death will be equal, unless you BELIEVE IN THE ONE WHO CONQUERED DEATH. Unless you believe in the one who was condemned in your stead, you will die the same death.

Jesus paid the penalty for you on the cross and the letter of accusation was hung to the cross - Col.2:9. The power of the gospel is in the revelation of what Christ Jesus did in His act of righteousness, in His act of obedience achieved on our behalf. So Paul's motivation in ministry is not to persuade man how sinful he is, what a sinner man is, but his motivation is to bring about the obedience that flows out of the hearing of faith. To quicken in man's heart the faith-persuasion quality of God concerning the obedience of Christ. Christ is portrayed as being crucified in such a vivid manner that man sees himself in Christ not as in a shop window, but as in a mirror - I hung upon that tree!

That legal bond which stood against man was nailed to the Cross. The FLESH DIED. The flesh was that bond, that letter, that epistle of Satan that counted against man. His flesh, his inability to please God was nailed to the Cross. We died in the flesh in His death to the flesh. "He thus disarmed principalities and powers." Satan rule over man because of man's guilt. The truth of your innocence is revealed in the gospel, and that cancels Satan's privilege to rule your life. He has no special privilege to rule your life - Satan has NO RIGHT TO RULE YOUR LIFE OR ANY OTHER INDIVIDUAL'S LIFE. The gospel reveals that. "One man's act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for ALL MEN." What is Paul's motivation in II Cor.5:14-21? He says: "The love of Christ constrains me". What is Paul's definition and knowledge about the love of Christ? Is it a sentimental feeling that - "Oh, man, shame, the world's really suffering out there. Let's go and help them." His motivation *is a conviction that One has died for all, and therefore ALL have died.* If language means anything then it must mean that ALL HAVE DIED.

If one man's death represents ALL, then it means that ALL are included in His death. Rom.6:5 says: "We are united in a death like His". Your faith does not put you into an inferior place of identification. You are united in a death like His and are sharing His freedom!

Rom.5:19 says: "For by one man's disobedience many were made sinners". They did not know it, but the law challenged it. The law made a demand upon man's will. The law came to reveal to man his inability to achieve to the standard that the law required. It says, "one man's disobedience made many sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous". Whose obedience are we considering in the New Testament? The obedience of the One man Jesus Christ! How we have taught the law to people - "Trust and obey brother. You have got to bring your side. You have got to bring your contribution", only to find yourself a miserable and frustrated believer again! *One man's obedience qualifies you to partake of God's righteousness.* That is why Paul says in Rom.1:5 that his ministry is to bring about *the obedience of faith.* It is a spontaneous obedience that is a natural outflow of being persuaded that Jesus' obedience for you was totally enough for the Father to declare you free! It is a new kind of action and a new kind of obedience.

It is the God who works within you both to will and to do so. He has overcome my inability to do, my excuse to fail. He has overcome that "WHY?" in our lives - "Why can I not overcome?" He condemned sin in the flesh - Rom.8:3. Now that is quite a place to condemn sin. In the flesh! The flesh became sin's record, sin's reputation, sin's letter of recommendation. The flesh was sin's letter

of recommendation and then Jesus went and cancelled sin's authority in the flesh, when *He proved for 33 years that the life He lived in heaven could be lived on earth in a human body without interference.* Hallelujah.

Was Jesus the only success out of 5 billion people on earth? The corn of wheat fell into the earth and died and is no longer alone (the only one of the same kind). The corn of wheat (Jesus) died and bear much fruit of the same kind - you and me! If He did not die, he would have been alone. Then He would have been some weird freak of history, but the life quality that He exhibited in the flesh, is the very life quality that becomes the living epistle as the Word incarnate in your life. *The law could not impart life*, therefore righteousness could not stand on the basis of the Law, but life was imparted through the death Jesus died. Amen. "So by one man's obedience many will be made righteous. So that as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through His righteousness", - Rom.5:21.

What gives grace it's throne? Your righteousness. Grace finds dominion in righteousness. Grace is not a weak thing. Grace is not some excuse that we offer - "O God, just be gracious! O God, I just plead for more mercy." God cannot give you more than what He has given you in Christ Jesus. God cannot go beyond what He has done in Christ Jesus. Christ's obedience forever seals your redemption! The language of the Old Covenant has been "DO", while the language of the New Covenant is "DONE". If you have discovered the "DONE" in Christ, you have discovered your contribution.

How do we successfully exhibit the life in the flesh? How do we successfully live this life in the flesh without becoming entangled again in behaviour that is inconsistent, a conduct that is inconsistent to what righteousness revealed in Christ Jesus? II Cor.10:5 (RSV) - In this verse Paul speaks of those who suspect us of acting in a worldly fashion! I want you to know that the moment you begin to take hold of the truth of your redemption, Satan will focus every possible contradiction, every possible suspicion against your integrity. He will watch you with such guile, with such lust as it were, to trap you again. Satan wants to hold against you the testimony that contradicts what GOD SAYS ABOUT YOU, so that guilt could capture you again. Your guilt was cancelled in Christ, but if he could somehow entangle you again in a sense of sin-consciousness, guilt-consciousness or inferiority, he could rule your life again. Some are expecting us to act in a worldly fashion, but we refuse to tamper with the word of truth concerning our lives. Remember II Cor.4:1. "We refuse to tamper with God's WORD. We refuse to find a little Scripture that will give us an excuse, so that we can build a doctrine around that excuse, to excuse a conduct of lesser quality than what God reveals in grace about us.

Paul speaks in II Cor.10:2 of people "who suspect us of acting in a worldly fashion / People who think of us as if we walked according to the flesh". He might as well have said, "we will not use the fact that we still live in the world, as an excuse for sin in our lives. Excuses like: "Oh you know the weakness of the flesh, Brother. Oh, we do not see man, we just see Jesus". How conveniently we excuse our failure in our theology. No wonder the church is left paralysed with no confidence. I remember years

ago when we were involved in a mission project. I remember very well how we did a great deal of street ministry to establish coffee bars. How zealously we would approach people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but soon there would be a *hesitancy and a reluctance to communicate with confidence*, because your own experience would begin to condemn your very own word and testimony, contradicting the very thing that you try to draw people into. You want to offer Jesus in the most positive way possible, but somehow in your own experience there is a subtle reluctance, when you compare the gospel with your own experience and the experience of so many others and you wonder how long this one will last. Will this one just join the statistics of 90% who just fall back and backslide into a lesser quality of life again? Do we have to adjust our theology to a standard of man's failure to successfully achieve what Christ has achieved for him, to successfully lay hold of that for which he was laid hold of in Christ?

The incarnation forever seals the fact of God's involvement with man! *God has laid hold of man in the incarnation. He has laid hold of YOU in His Son.* When the fullness of time came, God brought us all back into Christ so that His obedience could count as ours - Eph.1:10. For though we live in the world, we are not trying to make an excuse, because we live out of a life in Christ that is already a success! Although we live in the world, we do not live a life of survival, because life and abundance was given to us in Christ Jesus. I am so glad we do not have a gospel that just gives us a few reasons for survival, but it gives us every reason for success. The gospel gives us enough reason in Christ for being more than conquerors. There's a greater reality in what the

truth reveals than in the fact of what you have experienced. We refuse to submit ourselves to regulations and rules that are based upon man's experience. "We refuse to tamper with the Word of truth, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience" *We commend ourselves!* Is that not a bold thing to do? Paul has found that his competence is of God. He has found in I Cor.1:30 "THAT OF GOD ARE WE IN CHRIST, who was made unto us wisdom".

Christ became our wisdom! What is that wisdom? What does that mystery reveal? OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS AND OUR SANCTIFICATION! Sometimes we think "well we can be righteous by faith, but let us get sanctified through our own works. There is no difference in the mind of God. He says, "If you want to begin in the Spirit and end up in the flesh you are bewitched" - Gal.3:1-3. You are totally distracted from the truth that persuades you. Sanctification cannot be experienced in any other way, but through hearing with FAITH. Hearing how God sanctified you once and for all through the offering of the body of Christ - Heb.10:10. Jesus separated Himself to be ours exclusively without interference. He is a jealous God even though we still live in the world. I am so glad that when the gospel acknowledges the fact that we live in the world, it gives us no excuse to use our flesh as a convenient excuse.

II Cor.10:3-6 says our warfare is not according to the flesh, for then there would still be the possibility losing the battle and blaming the flesh as the reason for it. The actual war was won by Christ, and now we just take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. The

only war left is in the minds of people who do not want to accept the truth that the obedience OF Christ has already won the war! The war is not against you and your old nature, but to get your mind to accept that your old man died in Christ with Him at the cross! If there is still a second nature resident in you then at least half of you must go to hell! Then you must have two Fathers. God says not even the trees have two natures. He says: "How can you expect a thorn tree to produce grapes!" But he says "so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth. It shall successfully accomplish my design and instead of the thorn tree shall come up the cypress and instead of the briar the myrtle tree" - Is.55:11+13. A NEW CREATION. Amen. Not a patched up old man. A dead old man and a NEW MAN in CHRIST JESUS. What is the bridge that cancels the distance between God's provision and your experience? Just one thing, your ACKNOWLEDGING of the truth of your life that is hidden in Christ. Nothing puts into effect your faith as much as acknowledging the truth does.

Philemon 6 says that "the fellowship (koinonia) of our faith is found in *the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus*". Do not settle for weak fellowship. Weak fellowship is fellowship that is always weighed down by the problem or by problem-ruled consciousness. "Let us cast off every weight and every sin which seeks to so easily beset us". How do we do it? By looking away unto Jesus - Heb.12:1-2. Psychology tells us to dig into the root of your problem. God says: "LOOK AWAY UNTO JESUS, BEHOLDING HIM AS IN A MIRROR". Heb.2:8-9 - "God put all things in subjection to Christ, He left nothing out. But now we do not yet see all things put under Him, but we see Jesus..." We have no

excuse, because we see in Him the Pioneer and Perfecter of our salvation. We do not see Jesus in a religious sentimental way - We see Him as the PIONEER AND PERFECTOR OF OUR REDEMPTION. What He pioneered, He pioneered successfully, so that we might walk in the footprints of righteousness. He opened the way for us - a new and living way. A way that will not disappoint the Father's expectation. A way that will not limit you in your encounter with God. It is a new and living way, within the veil. What is the veil? HIS FLESH. The flesh can no longer be a successful excuse for you to be restricted in your encounter of God. "Oh maybe one day you know. When I die". Brother, you died! If Jesus died, then you also died! Your acknowledging of the truth will bridge the distance between truth and experience.

Remember the eagle that just sat on that rock after being released from ten years' imprisonment in the Pretoria Zoo. That eagle sat there on those high cliffs in the Drakensberg, but in its mind it remained captive, until the voice of the free eagle in the air awakened him. The cry of the free eagle echoed in the heart of the captive eagle, and stirred it to liberty. The truth is that all men were justified and set free in Jesus' death, but it need to be proclaimed to them before they can reach out to it and start flying in it. The gospel is not a doctrine, or a statement of faith. It is a living epistle. It is the Word made flesh in Jesus and in us. He says in II Cor.10.4-5 "though we live in the world, the weapons of our warfare are not worldly, but of divine power to destroy STRONGHOLDS". Strongholds are those areas where Satan has so established himself that it has become, as it were, his domain or his territory.

God says there is enough in this truth to demolish that hold that Satan thought he had over your life. Where did that hold establish itself - in your IMAGINATION - in your MIND that contradicted what your heart hungered and yearned for. Your mind established you under the law of sin and death and failure... "We destroy (cast down) imaginations (arguments) and every resistance to *the knowledge of God*, bringing every thought into captivity to *the obedience OF Christ*". What is the knowledge of God? The truth of your redemption, the truth of your release. The Word says clearly here in II Cor.10:5 in the Greek that we take every thought captive to "the obedience OF Christ" and not "the obedience IN Christ". God's purpose is not to press some obedience out of you, but to let you see that the obedience of Christ was sufficient for Him to accept you. If you have seen Christ's obedience, that has made you acceptable (Eph.1:5), it will stimulate obedience in your life concerning God! That is why it is "unto obedience of faith". Obedience is a natural outflow in your life when you have seen the favor in God's heart concerning you, because of the obedience of Christ. My favor in God's heart is built upon Christ's obedience and not mine!

"Therefore if you continue in the Word, you will know the truth and the truth will set you free". "WE TAKE EVERY THOUGHT CAPTIVE TO THE OBEDIENCE OF CHRIST". One Man's obedience has brought me the ability to obey God now in every aspect! So in my own thinking, when my heart wants to condemn me, when my heart wants to weigh me down and limit me to my own ability, then I take that thought captive to the obedience of Christ. Beholding Him, NOT beholding my failure or another man's opinion, or someone else's experience,

but beholding Him as in a mirror, I am being changed. There is no other place where your life can be transformed, but in the place of GAZING INTO THE PERFECT LAW OF LIBERTY. "For you are of Christ and you have crucified the flesh with it's desires and passions" - Gal.5:24.

Rom.6:17 - "But thanks be to God you who once were slaves of sin, yet you have obeyed from the heart that form (standard, mould) of doctrine to which you were delivered (moulded)". I love those Scriptures that speak about ONCE YOU WERE, BUT NOW YOU ARE. Col.1:21-22 "And you, who ONCE WERE alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, YET NOW He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, blameless, and irreproachable in His sight". Eph.5:8 - "For you WERE ONCE darkness, but NOW YOU ARE light in the Lord. Walk as children of light". Rom.7:5-6. "While we WERE living in the flesh, our sinful passions aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. BUT NOW..!" Do you see the difference between "once we were, but now we are"? I think one of the first lessons the believer needs to learn is a language lesson - The difference between PAST tense and PRESENT tense. It will solve many theological problems, if we can just learn the difference between PAST and PRESENT TENSE. It says: "But now we are discharged from the law, dead to that which held us captive, so that we serve not under the old written code, but in the NEW LIFE OF THE SPIRIT (newness of the Spirit)." God wants us to live out of the new law in our spirit and not from outward laws.

"But thanks be to God you who once were slaves of sin, yet you have obeyed FROM THE HEART that form (standard, mould) of doctrine to which you were delivered (moulded)" - Rom.6:17. That is the OBEDIENCE OF FAITH. You have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching in which your heart were moulded. The word standard there in the Greek is the word "tipos". It speaks of the "image" - the reflections - the mirrored reflections that was portrayed in Christ Jesus. So I have not submitted myself to a standard of Man's experience. I have submitted myself from my heart to the standard of revelation in Christ Jesus. Our new spirit was moulded in Christ according to His image and likeness. Our new spirit responds automatically with obedience when it comes face to face with that standard or mould of doctrine that is a true representation and portraying of Christ Jesus as the Truth. Likeness responds spontaneously on likeness! In beholding Christ as the truth of your life, there is a witness or resonance in the heart or spirit of man.

Rom.8:1 - "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." "Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" He finds himself sold under sin, sold into captivity, because of his own body. His own body became his problem through the education of the Law. (Chapter 7 speaks to those who know the law and live by the law). Rom.6:6 - "We know that our old man was crucified with Him, so that the sinful body might be destroyed". "We know..." This is the knowledge that liberates. You KNOW something with your spirit and UNDERSTAND it with your mind. The sinful body, that nature that held me captive to a foreign

influence, was destroyed in Christ and we no longer need to be enslaved to SIN.

Rom.8:2 continues with "Therefore there is now NO CONDEMNATION for those who ARE IN CHRIST JESUS." How do we get into Christ? Through your own religious diligence or through HIS OBEDIENCE? You are already included in Christ. "Of God are you in Christ". "The fullness of the deity bodily indwells Him, and you have come into the fullness of life through your union with Him" - Col.2:9-10. There is therefore no condemnation, for the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the Law of sin and death. For God has done what the Law, weakened by the flesh could not do, by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and He thus CONDEMNED SIN IN THE FLESH". Rom.8:5 - "For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those WHO LIVE ACCORDING TO THE SPIRIT SET THEIR MINDS ON THE THINGS OF THE SPIRIT." It is walking by faith or walking by the flesh. If you are included in Christ Jesus and you continue to behave like an ordinary man, it is because you are patterning your life according to the flesh. You are mirroring your life according to the flesh. You are allowing the flesh to be the mirror of your life, to be the standard and revelation to which you are prepared to submit yourself. "If then you have been raised with Christ Jesus, set your minds on things that are above" - Col.3:1-3. Walking in the spirit means to behold THE PERFECT LAW OF LIBERTY.

What is this perfect law of liberty that James 1:25 is speaking of - "But he who LOOKS INTO the perfect law of liberty AND CONTINUE IN IT, and IS NOT A

FORGETFUL HEARER but A DOER of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does". With the incarnation we were brought back into Christ, and in Him He walked with us the complete road of redemption. Christ never gave in to the temptations of the devil, and always obeyed God in everything that pleased the Fatherheart. This perfect life of Christ was declared from God as a law higher than any other law. Christ lived this law of liberty by tapping out of the law of love in the Fatherheart concerning Himself. God is fully persuaded that Christ paid for everything that was against us, and this persuasion is called a LAW OF FAITH - Rom.3:27. These laws are sustaining themselves, and tapping into them brings steadfastness in your life.

James 1:23-25 says- "If we hear the word and fail to do it, we are like men who see their natural face in a mirror, goes away, and immediately forgets *what kind of man he was*". When I first read the phrase "be doers of the word", I thought that sounds like Moses! That sounds like my own effort again! What quickens the action of the Word in my spirit? - HEARING WITH FAITH. The total action is now *captured in the seed* of the Word. You do not need to educate a specific plant species to behave like that plant species. You just need to nurture that seed in a positive environment! "For of his own will He brought us forth by the WORD OF TRUTH". See clearly the way God truthfully interprets your redemption. Redemption in the eyes of justice is a thing of absolute integrity. Is an absolute success. "And of His own will He brought us forth by the WORD of TRUTH" - James 1:18. What happens when I hear the Word, but do not become a doer of the Word? Then I am like a man who observes the face of his birth in a mirror, but straight away he goes

away, and forgets what manner of man he really is. You continue to *behave like an ordinary man!* Then the enemy uses that testimony of your life that contradicts the word of truth, as a rule over your life to disqualify you for fellowship with God!

We must continue to lay hold of those truths in the practical experience, the living epistle experience, *where the word so intertwines with your faith that it exhibits it's own testimony.* You do not need to turn phoney when you believe the Word. You do not need to become a hypocrite to prefer the Word. The Word carries enough expression. The truth carries enough expression in it's nature for the testimony of Christ to be confirmed in you. In I Cor.1:6-18 Paul says: "I thank God for the testimony of Christ that is confirmed in you, for He is able to SUSTAIN YOU IN BLAMELESS INNOCENCE". God is able to sustain you in that which you have initiated in your life. God wants to so embrace us in the fellowship of faith that gives credit to our lives. Listen carefully to the preaching about God's total persuasion concerning your life, and embrace it wholeheartedly until you experience a full harvest of fruit in your life!

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