

**General Topics :: REAL FREEDOM IN CHRIST!****REAL FREEDOM IN CHRIST!, on: 2009/2/14 11:06**

When I heard the gospel message and knew that I needed to be saved. I cried out to the Lord to save me and He did. I knew that I was saved and Christ was living inside of me. I went to tell people at the first opportunity about the grace of God and how he saved me.

In my new - found joy with the Lord, I had no idea that I still had a heart that was sinful and vile as existed in the breast of the greatest evildoer in the world. I knew something of Christ and His love. I knew little or nothing of myself and the deceitfulness of my own heart.

I enjoyed of the knowledge of God's salvation for a while when, in some dispute with my mother, my temper suddenly erupted, and in an angry fit I struck her and made her fall down. Horror immediately filled my soul. She looked at me and said "Well, aren't you a nice Christian! You'd better go down to the church and tell them what a sinner you've become!". I went to my room in anguish of heart to confess my sin to God in shame and bitter sorrow.

My Christian walk from this time on was an up - and - down roller coaster experience. I longed for perfect victory over the lusts and desires of the flesh. Yet I seemed to have more trouble with evil thoughts and unholy inclinations than I had ever known before. For a long time I kept these conflicts hidden, known only to God and to myself.

After some time, I became interested in what was called the "second blessing". I studied about an experience was spoken of which I felt was just what I needed. It was designated by various terms: 'The Second Blessing'; 'Sanctification'; 'Perfect Love'; 'Higher Life'; 'Cleansing from Inbred Sin'; A Clean Heart and by other expressions.

This teaching went like this: When a person is converted, God graciously forgives all sins. But this person still has an evil and wicked heart that needs a further work of grace called sanctification. This work has to do with the root sin.

The steps leading up to this second blessing are, firstly, conviction as to the need of holiness, just as in the beginning there was conviction of the need of salvation.

Secondly, a full surrender to God, or the laying of every hope, prospect and possession on the altar of consecration.

Thirdly, to claim in faith the incoming of the Holy Spirit as a refining fire to burn out all inbred sin, thus destroying in total every lust and passion, leaving the soul perfect in love.

Such was the teaching and along with it were heartfelt testimonies of experiences so remarkable that I could not doubt their genuineness, nor that what others seemed to enjoy was likewise for me if I would fulfill the conditions.

One lady told how for 20 years she had been kept from sin in thought, word, and deed. Her heart, she declared, was no longer 'deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked,' but now was as holy as Christ's heart. Others testified how their bad tempers had been rooted out when a full surrender was made. Evil propensities and unholy appetites had been instantly destroyed when holiness was claimed by faith. Eagerly I began to seek this precious experience. Earnestly I prayed for this and I asked God to reveal to me every unholy thing, that I might truly surrender all to Him. I gave up friends, pursuits, pleasures - everything I could think of that might hinder the incoming of the Holy Ghost and receiving the blessing. I did not, however, obtain what I sought, though I prayed zealously for months.

I became more desperate for this blessing. I fasted and prayed for long periods. One time I fell to my knees and I prayed in an agony for hours, asking God to show me anything that hindered my receiving the blessing. I struggled, but finally cried out loud 'Lord, I give up all - everything, every person, every enjoyment, that would hinder my living alone for You. Now give me, the blessing!'

Then I cried out loud in confidence, 'Lord, I now believe you have come in. You have cleansed and purified me from all sin. I claim it now. The work is done. I am sanctified by Thy blood. You have made me holy. I believe; I believe!' I was unpeakably happy. I felt that all my struggles were ended. Even now as I look back, I believe I was fully surrendered to the will of God at that moment. .

With a heart filled with praise, and I testified from that day forward how the Lord cleansed my heart by faith.

I thought my troubles were all over now. I thought I finally came out of the wilderness and I was now in living in Canaan. I thought I was freed from sin and that my heart was pure. I thought I had finally reached the state of full sanctification with no enemy within.

For some weeks after that experience, I lived in a dreamily - happy state, rejoicing in my fancied freedom from sin. One great idea had possession of my mind; and whether at work or in my leisure hours, I thought of little else than the wonderful event which had taken place. I testified in many gathers and held up myself as a striking example of consecration and holiness!

I did this without a thought of the sinful pride to which it was giving expression. I considered it my duty to continually direct attention to 'my experience of full salvation,' as it was called. 'If you don't testify to it, you will lose the blessing,'

As time went on, the excitement and thrill was gone. Then sin slowly crept back in my life. At first I did not want to accept that fact I was sinning. As time went on it was obvious that I was once again back in sin's grasp. I went to God in confession, and prayed to be cleansed again from all this.

I thought I must be backslidden because I lost the happy experiences of the Lord's goodness. I spent the many nights in prayer, asking God to renew me again and cleanse me fully from all sin and give me a pure heart. Each time I claimed it by faith, but I inevitably again fell again in sin. I was full of remorse because I continued to sin both in thought and in word, and with my actions.

Again I prayed and believed that the work of full inward cleansing was indeed done, and that I was now, if never before, actually rid of all carnality.

In vain I searched my heart to see if I had made a full surrender, and tried to give up every known thing that seemed in any sense evil or doubtful. Sometimes, for a month at a time, or even longer, I could persuade myself that at last I had indeed again received the blessing. But invariably a few weeks later prove to me once again more that I was just as evil as before.

I had to finally admit to myself and to others that I was living a lie. I went to a few ministers that I deeply respected to confess and to find out how they received the deliverance that my heart longed for. I confessed my failures and sin to these ministers and was in total shock and horror when they told me that they had not yet entered into this experience either. I was completely devastated by this knowledge.

I found myself becoming cold and cynical. This was the legitimate result of the teaching that I had been under. I reasoned that the Bible promised entire relief from indwelling sin to all who were wholly surrendered to the will of God. That I had surrendered seemed certain to me. Why then had I not been fully delivered from the carnal mind? It seemed to me that I had met every condition, and that God, on His part, had failed to perform what He had promised. I know it is wretched to write all this: but I see no other way to help others who are in the same state that I was in.

I knew that if I could only abide in Christ that all would be well, but I could not. I would begin the day with prayer, determined not to take my eye from Him for a moment, but pressure of duties, sometimes very trying, constant interruptions, often very wearing, would cause me to forget Him. I found that my unkind words became even more difficult to control. Each day brought its toll of sin, failure, and lack of power. To will was indeed present with me, but how to perform, I did not find.

Then came the question, "Is there no real rescue? Must I live like this until the day I die? Will I continue in constant conflict and, instead of victory, too often defeat?" How, too, could I preach with sincerity that to those who receive Jesus, "to them gave He power to become the sons of God, when it was not so in my experience? Instead of growing stronger, I seemed to be getting weaker and to have less power against sin. My faith and even hope were getting very low. I hated myself; I hated my sin, but I gained no strength against it.

I knew I was a child of God. His Spirit in my heart would cry, in spite of all this, "Abba, Father", but I did not experience my privileges as His child, I was utterly powerless. I thought that holiness was the answer to my problems. I felt that there was nothing I so much desired in this world, nothing I so much needed. But the more I pursued and strove after holiness

, the further away it became. My hope itself almost died out completely.

I did not think at the time that I was striving to attain this in my own strength. I knew I was powerless. I told the Lord so, and asked Him to give me help and strength and sometimes I almost believed He would keep and uphold me. But each day there was sin and failure to confess and mourn before God.

I almost ended up in despair. And yet, never did Christ seem more precious a Savior who could and would save such a sinner! And sometimes there were seasons not only of peace but of joy in the Lord. But they were fleeting and at best there was a sad lack of power. Oh, how good the Lord has been in bringing this conflict to an end!

All that time I felt assured that there was in Christ all I needed, but the practical question was how to get it out. He was rich, but I was poor; He was strong, but I was weak. I knew full well that there was in the vine, in the root, the stem, abundant fatness; but how to get it into my puny little branch was the question.

As gradually the light dawned on me, I saw that faith was the only prerequisite to laying hold of His fullness and making it my own. But I had not this faith. I strove for it, but it would not come. I tried to exercise it, but in vain. Seeing more and more the wondrous supply of grace laid up in Jesus, the fullness of our precious Savior - my helplessness and guilt seemed to increase. The sins I committed which were gross could not compare with my sin of unbelief which was their cause. I could not or would not take God at His word, but rather made Him a liar! Unbelief was, I felt, the damning sin of the world - yet I indulged in it. I prayed for faith but it did not come. What was I to do?

Little by little, the light began to dawn and I saw that I had been looking at my own experience and striving for holiness and not looking at Christ and What he had already done. I realized that the same grace that had saved me at first could carry me on. Dimly I apprehended that all I must be in Christ, or I was without any hope.

When my agony of soul was at its height, the Spirit of God revealed the truth of our oneness with Jesus as I had never seen it before. Then I read and began to see "If we believe not, He remains faithful." I looked to Jesus and saw that He had said, "I will never leave you." "Ah, here is rest!" I thought. "I have striven in vain to rest in Him. I'll strive no more. For has He not promised to abide with me - never to leave me, never to fail me?" And, He never will!

My faith was weak and then I saw that my faith would never have any power by striving after faith but only from resting on The Faithful one.

The great truth was getting a grip of me that holiness, perfect love, sanctification, and every other blessing, were mine in Christ from the moment I had believed, and mine forevermore, because all of pure grace. I had been looking at the wrong man - all was in another Man, and in that Man for me! But it took weeks to see this.

I have been learning all along my journey that the more my heart is taken up with Christ, the more do I enjoy practical deliverance from sin's power, and the more do I realize what it is to have the love of God shed abroad in that heart by the Holy Spirit given to me. I have found liberty and joy since being freed from bondage that I never thought it possible for a soul to know on earth, while I have a confidence in presenting this precious truth for the acceptance of others that contrasts with the uncertainty of the past.

But this was not all God showed me, nor one half. As I thought of the vine and the branches, what light the blessed Spirit poured directly into my soul! How great seemed my mistake in having wished to get the sap, the fullness, out of Him. I saw not only that Jesus would never leave me, but that I was a member of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. The vine now I see is not the root merely, but all - root, stem, branches, twigs, leaves, flowers, fruit; and Jesus is not only that; He is soil and sunshine, air and showers, and ten thousand times more than we have ever dreamed, wished for, or needed. Oh the joy of seeing this truth! I do pray that the eyes of your understanding may be enlightened, that you may know and enjoy the riches freely given us in Christ.

It is a wonderful thing to be really one with a risen and exalted Savior, to be a member of Christ! Think what it involves. Can Christ be rich and I poor? Can your right hand be rich and the left poor? Or your head be well fed while your body starves? Again, think of this bearing on prayer. If we ask anything unscriptural or not in accordance with the will of God, Christ Himself could not do that; but "If we ask anything according to His will, He hears us; and . . . we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him."

The sweetest part, if one may speak of one part being sweeter than another, is the rest which full identification with Christ

st brings. I am no longer anxious about anything, as I realize this; for He, I know, is able to carry out His will, and His will is mine. It makes no difference where He places me, or how. That is rather for Him to consider than for me; for in the easiest positions He must give me His grace, and in the most difficult His grace is sufficient. His resources are mine for He is mine, and is with me and dwells in me.

All this springs from the believers oneness with Christ. And since Christ is now living in my heart by faith, how happy I have been! I wish I could tell you instead of writing about it.

I am no better than I was before, I do not wish to be, nor am I striving to be, but I am dead and buried with Christ - yes, and risen too and ascended; and now Christ lives in me, and "the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

I now believe that I am dead to sin. God reckons me so, and tells me to reckon myself so. He knows best. All my past experiences may have shown that it was not so; but I dare not say it is not, when He says it is. I feel and know that old things have passed away. I am as capable of sinning as ever, but Christ is realized as present as never before. He cannot sin; and He can keep me from sinning.

I am sorry to have to confess it, but I cannot say that since I have seen this light I have not sinned; but I do feel there was no need to have done so. And further - walking more in the light, my conscience has been more tender; sin has been instantly seen, confessed, pardoned; and peace and joy (with humility) instantly restored; with one exception, when for several hours peace and joy did not return - from lack, as I had to learn, of full confession, and from some attempt to justify self.

Faith, I now see, is "the substance of things hoped for" and not mere shadow. It is not less than sight, but more. Sight only shows the outward forms of things; faith gives the substance. You can rest on substance; you can feed on substance. Christ dwelling in the heart by faith. Faith in His word of promise is power indeed, is life indeed. Christ and sin will not dwell together; nor can we experience His presence with love of the world or carelessness about "many things."

Nor should we look upon this experience, these truths, as only for the few. They are the birthright of every child of God, and no one can dispense with them without dishonor to our Lord. The only power for deliverance from sin or for serving the Lord is Christ.

I had been told over and over that the reason I had never received a clean heart was do to my lack of full consecration or lack of my full surrender. I spent much time and effort praying surrendering everything. I would consecrate myself and surrender myself to God but wound up only experiencing despair and failure. Then I would do it all over again with the same results. Now I see that this teaching is in error. Christ already dealt with my evil heart on the Cross. All of my wicked and evilness of my flesh is dead because of what He did. I am dead and buried with Christ and freed from sin. I do not have to try to consecrate myself or try to fully surrender. I do not now believe that this consecration or full surrender is even possible. The only surrender possible is to just relax in what Christ has already done for you and in you.

Romans 8:7 "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

Now I see that all my futile struggle for holiness in my life had been God's way of bringing me to the end of self - sufficiency. For the first time in my life, I began to really understand my identity as a Christian - that Christ is not simply in my life, but that He is my life.

I gave up on the trying to live a Christian life. I prayed, Lord Jesus, You know now that I've gone about trying to live my whole life the wrong way. I have tried and tried to live for You. I have tried, with Your help, to do a work for You. But today, Lord, I quit. I am not going to even try anymore. I understand now that You are my very life. So whatever needs to be done, You will have to do it through me. I am going to rest in You and whatever happens - happens. You are my life.

This life in Christ is not some second work of grace. It is a new awareness and appreciation for what Christ had already done for me the second I was saved. I had possessed His life all the time, but now I was experiencing and enjoying what I had possessed from the day I was saved. I was like the pauper who discovered oil on the property where he had lived all his life. I didn't get anything new from God when I prayed that prayer. Rather, I just began to enjoy what God had give me when I was born again.

General Topics :: REAL FREEDOM IN CHRIST!

2 Peter 1:3 - 4 "His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

May God give you the grace to lay hold on these blessed truths. God has made us one with Him, members of His very body.

Re: REAL FREEDOM IN CHRIST! - posted by TaylorOtwell (), on: 2009/2/14 12:01

Yes. Soak this in SermonIndex!

This was encouraging, brother. The objective, historical work of Christ is our justification and the truth that sanctifies us. If we are trying to kill sin to get justified, sin will dominate us. But, if we fight sin, by God's grace, as already justified and loved because of Christ's propitiation, sin will be mortified more and more.

Re: REAL FREEDOM IN CHRIST! - posted by TrueWitness, on: 2009/2/14 12:13

Yes this is a wonderful testimony! The Lord has recently brought this to my attention and how glorious it is to rest in Jesus! It would have been nice if you could have somewhere given the name of the author. It is Hudson Taylor of the China Inland Mission, a famous missionary to China of the 19th century. This passage describes his "spiritual secret". May God speak to each of us and touch your heart as he did this dear man of God's.

Re: - posted by TaylorOtwell (), on: 2009/2/14 12:50

Oh, this is from Hudson Taylor? I thought it was the poster's! :)

just relax in what Christ has already done, on: 2009/2/14 18:37

I had been told over and over that the reason I had never received a clean heart was do to my lack of full consecration or lack of my full surrender. I spent much time and effort praying surrendering everything. I would consecrate myself and surrender myself to God but wound up only experiencing despair and failure. Then I would do it all over again with the same results. Now I see that this teaching is in error. Christ already dealt with my evil heart on the Cross. All of my wicked and evilness of my flesh is dead because of what He did. I am dead and buried with Christ and freed from sin. I do not have to try to consecrate myself or try to fully surrender. I do not now believe that this consecration or full surrender is even possible. The only surrender possible is to just relax in what Christ has already done for you and in you.

Re: just relax in what Christ has already done - posted by reformer, on: 2009/2/14 18:44

Quote:
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i have been listening to Ernest O'Neil's sermon series called "A Clean Heart"...he speaks on consecrating ourselves fully to get a clean heart...I was enjoying the sermon until he started to speak of a type of second blessing. Being saved and then after a period of consecration you will receive a clean heart!? Atleast that is how I understood it..Maybe someone has listened to this sermon and could enlighten me if I am incorrect.

But I am like you...surrender to me is abiding in Christ alone...nothing in what I can "do" but just resting in His work.

you are correct, on: 2009/2/14 19:19

Yes he does teach that.

Re: REAL FREEDOM IN CHRIST! - posted by tj servant (), on: 2009/2/14 23:18

Thanks for posting this. Could you tell me where it came from? I mean...is it an excerpt from a book or just a singular work?

Thanks in advance.

Re: - posted by bible4life (), on: 2009/2/15 4:27

I can totally relate to this testimony. I for the past 3 years have struggled so much in sin, I had got into deep sin with my wife Allyce before we were married sexually and I could not get out of it. Worst of all she is unsaved, I got married when I felt like the Holy Spirit had left me and left me wide open for demons to attack me. I have not been the same for over 1 year now. I can't live for the Lord anymore at all, I have lost almost all of my faith and when I try to hold onto my faith Satan comes and deceives my mind and lies to me to the point where I doubt again, I have given up on trying to have faith, I really have, I just can't believe without Satan messing with me and I end up doubting everytime. I have been waiting for God but He has not come, I guess I am going to hell because God won't help me and I just can't believe like I use to. I just pray for God to forgive me and have mercy on me.

NOT a second work of grace, on: 2009/2/15 7:09

This life in Christ is not some second work of grace. It is a new awareness and appreciation for what Christ had already done for me the second I was saved. I had possessed His life all the time, but now I was experiencing and enjoying what I had possessed from the day I was saved. I was like the pauper who discovered oil on the property where he had lived all his life. I didn't get anything new from God when I prayed that prayer. Rather, I just began to enjoy what God had given me when I was born again.

Re: - posted by TrueWitness, on: 2009/2/15 10:01

TJ, you can read more of this testimony by going here:

<http://www.peterwade.com/articles/other/htchrall.shtml>

Thy lovingkindness is better than life!

Re: - posted by MJones (), on: 2009/2/15 14:56

Hi bible4life,

Think on these things. First of all, who do you think is trying to convince you you are going to hell? Jesus prayed to the Father that He would protect you from the evil one and then paid the ultimate price to make it possible for you to know Him. Wouldn't you agree that God would not then turn and try to convince you that you are disqualified? He is not willing that any should perish you know.

Your enemy the devil is out to destroy and discourage you. Whenever that happens, you have to recognize that and choose to focus rather on the truth proclaimed in the Bible.

In the spirit of this thread, I'll leave you with my favorite Hudson Taylor quote. 'God does not give us overcoming lives. He gives life to those who overcome.'

Look at Christ, on: 2009/2/16 8:23

The great truth was getting a grip of me that holiness, perfect love, sanctification, and every other blessing, were mine in Christ from the moment I had believed, and mine forevermore, because all of pure grace. I had been looking at the wrong man - all was in another Man, and in that Man for me! But it took weeks to see this.

Re: REAL FREEDOM IN CHRIST!, on: 2009/2/16 11:25

Wow, I remember a couple of years ago I read this testimony by Hudson Taylor and how he finally came to rest in Christ but I forgot the details. It's amazing what we forget. I admire people like this who aren't scared to speak of their struggles and revelations. Many want to give revelation and hide the struggle. To me, much of it goes hand in hand. We can make decisions to protect ourselves from possible pitfalls but we can't escape the world. Sometimes, when I see a suggestive billboard on the road I just want to hole myself up in cave like a medieval monk. But as much as I hate it, the reality is that the world is here and the 'cave thing' is just a dream born of the flesh to solve a problem only Christ can take care of.

But concerning the Brethren in Christ... it's not just our common love for Jesus that encourages us but knowing that we're not alone in our struggles that challenge us to let Christ be our strength. I believe it was Peter who said our struggles (temptations) are common among us. I believe this was meant as encouragement for us, we're not alone.... but together in this.

I respect men like Hudson who aren't too within themselves to share what everyone else wants to hide. Like David in his Psalms, Hudson is being 'real' with his testimony. No sugar, spice, and everything perfect.

Re: REAL FREEDOM IN CHRIST! - posted by Dountoother (), on: 2009/2/16 12:59

This must be the BEST testimony I have ever read regarding living in grace!!

How foolish we are! As Paul said to the Galatians 'having begun in the Spirit are ye now made perfect by the flesh?' Which of us has not at some point in our life fallen away from God's mercy and into legalism. And how much easier it is upon our pride to do so!

Thank God for Hudson Taylor and thank you so much 'freed'!

Re: REAL FREEDOM IN CHRIST! - posted by Dountoother (), on: 2009/2/16 13:43

Dear 'bible4life' don't despair...there is GOOD NEWS! VERY GOOD NEWS!

There really is freedom in Christ! And we can all, including you, have it...we just have to CHOOSE it. God has given us freedom to choose; therefore we are all responsible for the state we're in. We are in the state we're in (good or bad) because of our CHOICES.

We may be in a prison but God has given us a key so, if we choose to, we can walk free. If we're not free then IT'S OUR OWN FAULT! Not God's, not Satan's, not any other person's.....just ours.

That is good news indeed. Because we're not helpless, at someone else's mercy, we can do something about it. We can use the key and just walk out. Easy.

So, don't blame the Holy Spirit for leaving you, the devil for lying to you and messing with you, God for not coming when you're waiting or for refusing to help you....admit it's your own fault (and we're all in this with you, all guilty too) and make the right choices.

Believe God; all His words are true.

Don't believe Satan; all his words are lies.

Read that testimony all the way through and get to the good bit. Your life will change!

God bless you, Gwen

