

FIFTY-FIVE YEARS IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” 2 Cor. 13:5

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Gal. 2:20

By Pastor Del Wray

Concentrating the last fifty-five years in a single thesis has been an awesome undertaking. The experiences of over half a century are beyond words for a man to pen. But if I were to pick out the number one incident that stood above all others it would be; An overwhelming gratitude that my salvation did not depend upon any work of my own but entirely upon the finished work of Jesus Christ. Realizing that nothing could I do to satisfy the righteousness of a holy God and that that holy God had already did it all for me. Unfathomable, beyond the intellect of mere infinite man the holy God provided what no one else could provide. The best man could be would not do, complete obedience would not do it, following another would not work, the efforts of my own only to end in complete failure. Choosing to follow mere man, his creeds, his sacraments, his traditions nothing would avail. Empty, vain, useless and helpless having hit base bottom only to look up and see the depths of sin that had befallen me, and in complete disgust giving up I cry out who shall deliver me from this body of sin, this body of death? Then the glorious light, the Shekinah glory of God's presence consumed me with the magnificent gospel of His Son Jesus Christ the Lord of splendor came down, the Son of God dying in my place for me.

I am extremely grateful that God Himself, in His Son Jesus Christ, brought out my eternal redemption on an old rugged cross two thousand years ago, long before I was born, and all I had to do was accept His gift from and in my heart! Recognizing the sinfulness of my own heart and how desperately wicked, beyond cure and beyond help I was. Filthy rags my own righteousness, vanity of vanities from the top of my head to the soles of my feet. Sin so encompassing that it had become innate, inborn, it had become and instinct, natural, so natural as sleep itself, natural as eating, from the outer being to the inner soul corrupt beyond measure that my whole being was in total ruin, totally depraved except for the free indwelling will, the ability to **accept** or **reject** the free offer of His precious Son Jesus Christ. This fall was so heinous that man could not move, converse or even sleep without sin being ever present, attached to these bodies in which we dwell. Men unable to distinguish the severity of the original fall back some six thousand years ago and its total undoing of mankind in his relation to a holy, righteous, fire breathing God literally able to only speak and form the Universe in which we live, to breath out from His mouth fiery exploding stars and planets in a Universe that is forever growing and expanding. God designed before even the worlds were spoken into existence.

God's salvation's plan so immeasurable, so immense, so enormous that He knew that we could not live up to His standard, we could not live up to His measure of life so He chose to send back His Holy Spirit, "Christ in me" to live out His life through each of His children. I can't live it! Impossible! He lives it through me. If ever anything is done for God in this sin cursed world it is Jesus Christ that's doing it! We ought to be running the isles about now! What we're doing is because Jesus Christ is living in us, living His life anew through you and me as He promised He would. He is the soul winner and only He can change a man. Only Jesus! If this world could only see Jesus Christ again living through His people? I'm not going to try and kid myself. I've seen in my own journey through life how God super-naturally changes a man. Kid me not! When God picks a drunkard up out of the streets and turns him into a mighty instrument He uses to win over two hundred and fifty people to Christ in a two year period you can talk to me about the kind of God I serve. It's not you, it's Jesus! I saw it with my own eyes. God saved a drunk, a medical doctor who had ruined his life and practice with alcohol and became a drunkard on the streets of downtown Honolulu until one night he was literally picked up out of the gutter and changed in a moment in a three day period. I know, I was there I had the great privilege to baptize all two-hundred and fifty of those souls in the late 1960's. When we get down and see how wretched we are, maybe then, God can use us to save many others around us. We serve an almighty, Universe creating God!

"...but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Isa. 66:2

In all other religions of the world and in all civilized countries, those who are not true Christians invariably depend upon their good works, charitable deeds and good-natured dispositions to save them; in other words, they expect to save themselves. Oh, the wretched uncertainty of such efforts, for who could tell when God was satisfied, or what sinner is in a position to estimate the awfulness of sin, and therefore the penalty attached to a single sin. How then could he ever determine what amount of good works would suffice as compensation?

No wonder our Gospel is hid from a lost dying world? The Gospel of Peace, for that heart is truly at rest which recognizes Christ as its Saviour. Oh, the misery of restless introspection trying to make up a balance sheet to present to God urging our own claims so that we might live with Him forever. How repugnant! How hideous! For one to think he merits the favor of God. Revolting! And then to learn how blessed the life that looks away from himself to another, to Jesus Christ for forgiveness and peace with God. Grace beyond measure, grace unspeakable, and grace so freely extended to the empty, helpless and receptive soul! Wouldn't it be wise to accept His salvation?

"For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:" Job 19:25-26

GOD WALKS WITH ME LET HIM WALK WITH YOU!