

# THE PATH TO PEACE

## 1. LOVE BEYOND COMPARE

“God is Love” is written upon every opening bud, upon every spire of springing grass. The lovely birds making the air vocal with their happy songs, the delicately tinted flowers in their perfection perfuming the air, the lofty trees of the forest with their rich foliage of living green—all testify to the tender, fatherly care of our God, and to His desire to make His children happy.

\* After 4000 years of degeneration and sin, God became a human helpless baby, lived on earth as a boy, and eventually a man, for thirty years working with Joseph in the carpenter’s trade. He then taught and healed everyone who came to Him for three and a half years, before allowing His own created beings to cruelly murder Him at Calvary, so that He the Sinless Son of God could die in our stead and redeem us from the power of sin which is eternal death. Can you understand this kind of love, where, “while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”?

ILLUSTRATION—Boy donating his blood for sister. Sister was dying of a rare disease and had a rare blood type also. Doctors could only find similar type with her very young brother. When asked if he would give his blood to his sister, he was silent for a while and then agreed. When the transfusion was complete, the colour came back to his sister’s face but her brother looked very pale and was very quiet. Then he asked the Doctors —“When will I die?” Our Saviour, Jesus, was willing to give His blood and die for each one of us. Oh what a Saviour is Jesus my Lord!

## 2. RECOGNIZING YOUR NEED

It is impossible for us, of ourselves, to escape from the pit of sin in which we are sunken. Our hearts are evil and we cannot change them.....Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behaviour, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life. There must be a Power working from within, a new life from above, before men (and women), can be changed from sin to holiness. That Power is Christ. He alone, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, can create in us a new heart, new desires and new habits and behaviour.

\*There is nothing you can do to earn your way to heaven. Your only Way to eternal life is through Jesus Christ. He paid the price of redemption for every soul in His broken body and spilt blood on Calvary’s Hill. You don’t have to be good to be saved, but you do have to be saved to be good. When we accept His free gift of salvation, His Presence dwells within us and gives us the power to overcome all sin in our lives. 1 John 2: 12 “....If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.”

ILLUSTRATION STORY –Travelling the Highway Sydney to Newcastle—Signs “No stopping or Turning”! Then I noticed a Telephone Sign. It reminded me of the text quoted above. If we fall, don’t despair. We have an Emergency Stopping Area and a “Telephone” to our Heavenly High Priest—our Advocate-- Who is able to identify with us, and grant us forgiveness.

### 3. GIVE YOUR GUILT AWAY

Repentance includes a sorrow for sin, and a turning away from it.....There are many who fail to understand the true nature of repentance. Multitudes sorrow that they have sinned and even make an outward reformation because they fear that their wrongdoing will bring suffering upon themselves, but this is not true repentance. Such was the confession of Saul and Balaam, Judas and Pharoah.

**\*Contrast these characters with David. He did some very wicked things, but when he realized his sinfulness he sincerely repented and confessed his sin, and God forgave him, and even called him a man after God's own heart. He can save to the uttermost, (or guttermost), all who come to Him. Consider also Paul's conversion.**

**ILLUSTRATION STORY of Harry Orchard. Worked for the Unions as an Assassin to anyone opposing the wishes of the Unions. He had many murders to his 'credit' before he was caught and sentenced to Life in Penitentiary. BUT...He found Jesus there and became a changed man, so much so that the authorities built him a little cottage of his own, and allowed him freedom within the gaol to witness to all the inmates of God's Love for every soul.**

The sinner may resist God's love; may refuse to be drawn to Christ; but if he does not resist, he will be drawn to Jesus.... The exceeding sinfulness of sin can be estimated only in the light of the cross.

Christ is ready to set us free from sin, but He does not force the will; and if by persistent transgression the will itself is wholly bent on evil, and we do not desire to be set free, if we will not accept His Grace, what more can He do?

### 4. HOW TO LIVE WITH YOUR CONSCIENCE

True confession is always of a specific character, and acknowledges particular sins. They may be of such a nature as to be brought before God only; they may be wrongs that should be confessed to individuals who have suffered injury through them; or they may be of a public character, and should then be publicly confessed. But all confession should be definite, and to the point, acknowledging the very sins of which you are guilty.....The humble and broken heart, subdued by genuine repentance, will appreciate something of the love of God and the cost of Calvary, and as a son confesses to a loving father, so will the truly penitent bring all his sins before God. And it is written, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9

**\* A beautiful example of true confession is found in Psalm 51. Another example is that of Paul in Acts 26:10,11. Daniel's prayer in Daniel 9 is a very good example also.**

### 5. CHOOSING THE BEST IN LIFE

Many are inquiring, "How am I to make the surrender of myself to God?" You desire to give yourself to Him, but you are weak in moral power, in slavery to doubt, and controlled by the habits of your life of sin. Your promises and resolutions are like ropes of sand. You cannot control your thoughts, your impulses, your affections.....causing you to feel that God can not accept you; but you need not despair. What you need to understand is the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision or of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections, but you can choose to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you, to do according to His good pleasure.....Through the right exercise of the will, an entire change may be made in your life. By yielding up your will to Christ, you ally yourself with the Power that is above all principalities and powers. You will have strength from above to hold you steadfast, and thus through constant surrender to God, you will be enabled to live the new life, even the life of faith.

**\*The part that man is required to sustain is immeasurably small, yet in the plan of God, it is just that part that is needed to make the work a success. God does nothing for man without his cooperation. God never forces His will on us. He has given us all Free Choice, and leaves us to choose or reject His Ways. But He longs to have everyone see His love and choose to serve Him because we love Him. John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever (that includes you and me!) believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."**

## 6. HOW TO HAVE PEACE OF MIND

Do not wait to feel that you are made whole, but say, "I believe it. It is so, not because I feel it, but because God has promised" ..... "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 8:1. ....Through this simple act of believing God, the Holy Spirit has begotten a new life in your heart. You are as a child born into the family of God, and He loves you as He loves His Son.....Jesus loves to have us come to Him just as we are, sinful, helpless, dependent....As it is by giving yourself to God, and believing Him, that you become His child, so you are to live in Him.

The apostle says, "As you have therefore received Christ Jesus, the Lord, so walk ye in Him." Colossians 2:6

**\*How wonderful to know that you are now a son or daughter of the Living God. We become princes and princesses of the Royal Family of God, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. What a privilege is ours, and all we have to do is accept His gracious gift which He offers everyone completely FREE. "Whosoever will, may come. Let him take of the water of life freely." Revelation 22:17**

## 7. YOU CAN IF YOU WILL

We do not earn salvation by our obedience; for salvation is the free gift of God, to be received by faith. But obedience is the fruit of faith.

**\*Two great errors to beware of:**

a) To think that there is some work we have to do before we can have God's forgiveness, or come to Him.

We can come to Him just as we are. The hymn says "Just as I am, without one plea..." "He that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37

b) To think that we can be saved without regard to God's commands—by faith alone!

Many people embrace this erroneous belief today. Romans 2:13 "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." James 2:12-20 "Faith without works is dead."

**ILLUSTRATION -- Rowboat with two oars.** Pr Burnside, that great evangelist of yesteryear used this illustration, to show the balance between faith and works. Try rowing a boat with just one oar, and we just go round and round in circles. As James says plainly in chapter 2, "I'll show you my faith by my works, because faith without works is dead." Our works can never save us. Faith must come first, and that faith will work by love to transform our lives to His beautiful character.

#### **8. MEASURING YOUR MATURITY**

The change of heart by which we become children of God is spoken of in the Bible as birth. Again it is compared to the germination of a good seed sown by the husbandman. In like manner those who are just converted to Christ are, "as newborn babes" to "grow up" to the stature of men and women in Christ.....Unless a man is "born from above", he cannot become a partaker of the life which Christ came to give. John 3:3 ....Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be," Take me, O Lord, as wholly thine. I lay all my plans at Your feet. Use me today in Your service. Abide in me, and let all my work be wrought in Thee." ....

**\*Through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we can live each day successfully, and daily grow more and more like Jesus. The fruits of the Spirit will be seen in our lives. See Galatians 5: 22-25 Read these verses carefully.**

#### **9. LIVING THROUGH GIVING**

Wherever the life of God is in the hearts of men, it will flow out to others in love and blessing. When the love of Christ is enshrined in the heart, like a sweet fragrance it can not be hidden. The spirit of unselfish labour for others gives depth, stability, and Christlike loveliness to the character, and brings peace and happiness to its possessor.... The love of Christ, revealed to us, makes us debtors to all who know Him not. God has given us light, not for ourselves alone, but to shed upon them....The humblest and poorest of the disciples of Jesus, can be a blessing to others.

**\*ILLUSTRATION --My mother-in-law.** My wife's mother was crippled for years in later life with arthritis which seriously curtailed her witnessing efforts, but she was determined to share her faith and used to write little messages from Scripture on pretty paper, which she would give away or send to anyone who'd accept them. She did what she could for her Lord.

## 10. IS YOUR EDUCATION COMPLETE

Many are the ways in which God is seeking to make Himself known to us. Nature speaks to our senses without ceasing. If we will but listen, God's created works will teach us precious lessons of obedience and trust.....No tears are shed that He does not notice. There is no smile that He does not mark.....God speaks to us in His written Word. Here we have in clearer lines the revelation of His character, of His dealings with men and the great work of redemption.....Fill the whole heart with the Word of God. They are the living water, quenching our burning thirst....We should not take the testimony of any man as to what the Scriptures teach, but should study the words of God for ourselves. If we allow others to do our thinking, we shall have crippled energies and contracted abilities....There is nothing more calculated to strengthen the intellect than the study of the Scriptures. No other book is so potent to elevate the thoughts, to give vigour to the faculties, as the broad, ennobling truths of the Bible. If God's Word were studied as it should be, men would have a breadth of mind, a nobility of character, and a stability of purpose rarely seen in these times.....Never should the Bible be studied without prayer.

**\* ILLUSTRATION—Indian student. He was enrolled in a Christian school, and though brought up as a Hindu worshipping many “gods”, he started reading the Old and New Testaments every day. At the end of the year, he was not only one of the top students, but he had found salvation in Jesus Christ. Praise the Lord for His Precious Word.**

## 11. THE KEY TO LIMITLESS TREASURE

Through nature and revelation, through His Providence, and by the influence of His Spirit, God speaks to us.....Prayer is the key in the hand of faith, to unlock Heaven's storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence..... Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend.

**\*Another very important element of effectual prayer is faith....“What things soever you desire, when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them.” Mark 11:24 Do we really take Him at His Word?**

**ILLUSTRATION—Lady and removal of mountain. At church one day she heard the preacher read out, Mar\_11:23 “For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.” Well, she had a mountain blocking her view so decided to put this to the test, and prayed for the mountain to be removed. In the morning, it was still, and she said, “There, I didn't think it would work anyhow!”**

**Another very important element of effectual prayer is to ask in accordance with His will. Allow God to answer in His own good time and in His own way, which may not be as we desire.**

**ILLUSTRATION—Windscreen on NQ road. A few minutes after we prayed for the Lord to protect our windscreen, it was smashed! But if it hadn't been for that very unexpected answer to our**

prayers, we would not have had to stay in Gladstone over Sabbath—would never have met the people who introduced us to natural Healing God's way. Caroline would have had a totally unnecessary operation, and we would not have learned the basics of Health by using God's Laws.

**My Chainsaw Incident.** Again, when I offered myself wholly to the Lord that Monday morning, to use however He saw fit, I did not expect to have high-revving chainsaw rip through the right side of my chest severing ribs, diaphragm, liver and lung area. BUT... through that experience I have been able to share God's ways, and His Salvation with millions, and was able to baptize one person into Christ. So, Praise the Lord, and I will, like Job, trust Him though He slay me!

## 12. UNDERSTANDING YOUR LIMITATIONS

It is impossible for finite minds fully to comprehend the character or the works of the Infinite One....The Word of God, like its Author, presents mysteries that can never be fully comprehended by finite beings. The entrance of sin into the world, the incarnation of Christ, regeneration, the resurrection, and many other subjects in the Bible, are mysteries too deep for the human mind to explain, or even to fully comprehend. But we have no reason to doubt God's Word because we cannot fully understand the mysteries of His Providence. In the natural world we are constantly surrounded with mysteries that we cannot fathom.... Those who wish to doubt will have opportunity; while those who really desire to know the Truth, will find plenty of evidence on which to rest their faith....Disguise it as they may, the real cause of doubt and scepticism, in most cases, is the love of sin. The teachings and restrictions of God's Word are not welcome to the proud, sin-loving heart, and those who are unwilling to obey its requirements are ready to doubt its authority...."Now we see through a glass darkly ; but then face to face: now know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." 1 Cor. 13: 12

**\*COMPARE THE EVOLUTION THEORY----**Lots of faith needed to believe it. Special Creation is ever so much more credible. When I study the body, and its intricate systems and interaction of all the organs, I find myself marvelling at the incredible Design. In all the fauna and flora of earth, His Design is so evident. In the vastness of space and the universe, who can find out God and His ways? Only an Omniscient God could create such beauty and harmony in nature. Sure, there are nasty sides to it as well as a result of sin and the curse, but that will all be changed and forgotten when He re-creates the Earth; when He sets up His Everlasting Kingdom.

## 13. WALL TO WALL HAPPINESS

Many, walking along the path of life, dwell upon their mistakes and failures and disappointments, and their hearts are filled with grief and discouragement.

**\*A friend put it very simply when we were in PNG. "Discouragement is the anaesthetic Satan uses before he takes out your heart." And that is right on target. Don't give in to discouragement and despondency. Look to Jesus. Remember what He went through, forsaken by His closest friends, betrayed by one of His followers, and murdered by those He came to save!**

If we keep uppermost in our minds the unkind and unjust acts of others, we shall find it impossible to love them as Christ loved us; but if our thoughts dwell on the wondrous love and pity of Christ

for us, the same spirit will flow out to others. We should love and respect one another, notwithstanding the faults and imperfections that we cannot help seeing. This will kill out all narrowing selfishness and make us large-hearted and generous.

The soul redeemed and cleansed from sin, with all its noble powers dedicated to the service of God, is of surpassing worth; and there is joy in heaven in the presence of God and the holy angels over one soul redeemed, a joy that is expressed in songs of holy triumph.

**\* ILLUSTRATION-- Years ago in southern USA, the slave trade was in full swing....a very handsome strong, young man was on the platform and the bidding began. He made it very clear that he would not work for any man---he was the proud chief of his African tribe. The bidding soared higher and higher, until at last, at a huge price, the hammer fell. As he was being led away by his buyer, he kept repeating that he would not work as a slave for anyone!**

**The gentleman who bought him untied his bonds and said very calmly, "Friend, I did not buy you at such a high price to be my slave. I bought you to set you free!" What was the slave's response? "Oh Master! Thank you! Thank you! I will gladly serve you for the rest of my life!"**

**Oh that we would contemplate the incredible price paid by God Himself for our redemption, to set us free! "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Hebrews 2:3**

**Praise the Lord! Numbers 6:24,-26 And now may....."The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face to shine upon you; the Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace."**

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**NB: The text in Black is quoted as extracts from the little Gospel Book—"Steps to Christ."**

**All text in Red is my own insertion and my own thoughts.**

**86 million copies have been printed in over 100 languages. I used it as one of my textbooks for my high school students in PNG for English Classes and they were always on time for English Class. They loved the beautiful language and the Power of the Spirit of God Who accompanies this little book wherever it is read.**

**May the Lord bless you as you contemplate the momentous themes contained therein.**

**With Christian love and greetings, sincerely,**

**Don Menkens.**

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