

Two Deliverance's Available at the Cross

By: Sylvia Pearce

(This is a chapter from, "The Treasures of Darkness.")

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled
to God by the death of His Son much more, being reconciled,
we shall be saved by His life"

(Romans 5:10).

There is a section in the book of John that really catches my attention. It is where Jesus says, "I am the bread of life: he that comes to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." Also there is the passage from the Ephesian epistle: "To know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God" (3:19). These two passages challenge us as Christians to know total deliverance and total fulfillment in our lives today. Yet, if we are really honest, most of the Christian world would have to say that this is only an aspiration which can never be attained right here and right now. For we mistakenly think that total deliverance and total fulfillment are only really attainable in our future heavenly home.

Why did Jesus promise fulfillment if it is only a carrot on a stick designed to tease us? The one thing we all know about God's nature is that "He cannot lie" (Titus 1:2). So, if Jesus promised it, then total satisfaction is available to us today. That is why Paul prays for us in the Ephesian epistle: "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of his call, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance

in the saints.” Paul is saying that we have an inheritance in Christ that we haven’t even seen let alone entered into.

What we don’t realize is that there are two deliverance’s available to us by the Cross of Christ. We Christians understand the first deliverance from our past sins, through faith in the blood of Christ. We realize the forgiveness of our past sins, we know our future is secure, and we confidently look to heaven as our eternal home. This gives us peace from the past and assurance for the future, but what about our present tense experience? Can’t we all agree that most of us live a roller coaster life of trying and failing, falling far short of what Jesus promised in John 6:35 (never thirsting, never hungering)?

What does total deliverance mean? I believe the Gospel is much deeper and broader than most Christians realize. We have heard only half of the Gospel, the provision of the precious blood. Never do we hear that there is deliverance in the precious body of Christ. I often hear Christians singing “there is power, power, wonder working power, in the blood of the Lamb,” but I have never heard anyone say or sing, “there is wonder working power in the body of the Lamb.” But there is!

Jesus brings out both aspects of the gospel when he makes this provocative statement in John 6:53-57; “Verily, verily, I say unto you, except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whosoever eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, dwells in me, and I in him. As the living Father has sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eats me, even he shall live (daily) by me.”

We know that eating and drinking are metaphors for faith. Faith is receiving what is available to us, and what we take, like food, takes and becomes us. God is satisfied when we take by faith (drink) the blood of His Son, because “without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.” Without our receiving that provision we are still in our sins.

But why are we Christians so dissatisfied in our daily lives? I believe it is because we have never entered into the second deliverance provided for us by the body death and resurrection of Christ; "Except you eat my flesh, you will have no life in you." Eating His flesh means that we take the provision of His bodily death and resurrection as our present tense deliverance. The blood of Christ satisfies God, and the body of Christ satisfies us. When God and man are both satisfied, then we will never hunger or thirst again.

What are the available provisions in the "Blood and Body" of Christ? These two aspects of the gospel are symbolized in the Lord's supper: the wine and the bread. The Blood of Christ, symbolized by the wine, is offered to guilty and hopeless sinners as a provision for our sins. Jesus Christ took our sins on himself and bore the full death penalty. This sacrificial offering totally satisfied God's justice, thereby setting us free from sin. Then, by the miracle of the resurrection, Jesus was raised from the dead for our justification, thereby, giving us eternal life. The blood gives us peace with God, the forgiveness from our past sins, and security for our future destiny.

Secondly, the Body of Christ, symbolized by the bread, is offered to helpless saints as our present tense deliverance. The deeper element of the gospel is that Jesus became the very nature of sin, which is Satan expressing himself as us (II Cor. 5:21). Jesus became sin and then died to it, and in his resurrection we are made one with his righteousness. There is a nature exchange, thereby exchanging our consciousness from a separated striving-self-sufficient consciousness, which is the nature and mind of Satan, to Christ's own life as us. Christ didn't come to improve us, He came to replace us.

The Cross (body death) exchanges sin's nature of self-centeredness with Christ's nature of "other love;" it exchanges sin's consciousness of separation with Christ's own mind of oneness; and finally, it exchanges sin's operation of striving self-effort with Christ's own operation of faith, causing us to know oneness with Christ..

Let us look deeper into the full meaning of the Body of Christ. We can begin by answering the question, "What is the Body of Christ?" The Body of Christ is his humanity or his human-ness. My good friend Linda Bunting says, "The Jews deny Jesus' divinity, while we Christians deny His humanity." We know that the Bible says that He was God in the flesh, but to most people that means an all-knowing consciousness without weakness and human limitations. Somehow, we think that weakness and humanity are sinful and wrong in themselves, therefore denying Jesus' humanity the same way we deny our own. We must look deeper into the life of Christ to know that when God became flesh, he became as weak and as capable of human frailties, emotions, and desires as we are: He truly became like us.