

SECRETS OF PERSONAL POWER

own little boat. After he had it safely in his own possession again, he patted it tenderly and was heard to say, "Little boat, now you are twice mine. First I made you and then I bought you."

This is exactly what Jesus can say to each one of us. He is our Creator who made us, and then later, on Calvary's cross, He bought us with His blood, redeeming us from sin. We are indeed twice His. As Peter expresses it: "You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your fathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot." 1 Peter 1: 18, 19, RSV.

As the result of what Jesus has done for us, we may know that our past sins are forgiven. The sense of guilt which might make life unbearable to us can be removed, and we can face the world with our heads up, assured that God loves us, that we have worth in His sight, that Christ Jesus on Calvary has truly redeemed us. In humble gratitude let us give our lives in dedication and devotion to such a Savior and God.

In Place of Revenge, a Blessing

When faced with injustice and grief many become embittered and filled with a desire to "fight back." Retaliation and revenge, coupled with a desire for retribution, are all too common among us. However, this spirit, when indulged, brings no permanent solution, but rather compounds the difficulties.

Peter, one of Christ's disciples, reacted violently to any thwarting negative experience in his life. When the mob came to the garden of Gethsemane to take Jesus, he displayed his usual impetuous behavior, completely losing his head. He wildly swung a quickly stolen sword through the air, neatly cutting off the ear of the high priest's servant. In doing so he followed the well-known pattern of immediately striking back at anyone who first harmed him.

But a few hours later a great change took place in Peter's life, the reality of which could never be questioned. Peter was converted, born again, through the power of Jesus Christ in his life. It was the new Peter who wrote this counsel in 1 Peter 3:8, 9, RSV: "Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love of the brethren, a tender heart and a humble mind. Do not return evil for evil or reviling for reviling; but on the contrary bless, for to this you have been called, that you may obtain a blessing." Peter-this rough, crude, fighting character from down by the waterfront had become gentle, sympathetic, understanding and forgiving. In this he followed the beautiful example of his much-loved Master, "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again." 1 Peter 2:23.

Have you ever had to face injustice coupled with grief? If you have a living faith in God and if you know the converting power of Jesus Christ in your life, you, too, can find a rewarding solution. First of all, it can come in the blessed hope that someday soon Jesus Christ is coming back to this earth to raise the righteous dead and reunite them with us. This has brought comfort and solace to God's people through the ages. And second, you can face the injustice with the spirit of Jesus Christ, who could say, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." We may not always be able to understand all the "whys" of life's experiences, but we can forgive anyway.

May Christ's holy and righteous outlook be ours today and always.

Experiment With Faith

Belief and trust in God is not limited to any one period of life. Age only has the advantage of being able to look back and recognize that faith was relevant to every period of life. A real abiding faith can have meaning to everyone at every age.

Does religious faith come easily to you? If you are like most of us, you perhaps have had periods of doubt. It may be that right now you are in such a period. Someone has suggested that people are strange indeed,

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because if you tell a man that there are 270 trillion, 678 million, 934 thousand, 341 stars in the universe, he will believe you; but if a sign says "Fresh Paint," that same man will have to make a personal investigation. Again, a man may be told that there are colors above the ultra-violet and below the infra-red which are not registered on the spectrum. No human eye can see them. Yet no one questions their existence. But these same individuals find it hard to believe that God can be present with us day by day just because He, too, is unseen.

The point is that we demand more proof for some things than others. Without question we demand more proof for religious assertions than we do for some scientific ones.

Don't misunderstand me; I am not saying that doubt is all bad. In the words of the famous poem, "Whoever doubted, never half believed." And Tennyson was at least partly right when he said, "There lives more faith in honest doubt, believe me, than in half the creeds." Doubt precedes any faith which is really worthwhile. We all know that to use the scientific approach is to work on various assumptions and then by much experimentation prove or disprove them. There is nothing basically wrong with this method; it is widely accepted and considered modern and scientific. It works for science; why should it not also work for religion? Faith must begin with an experiment, but it will always end with an experience. Test these things in your own life. Assume that God lives, that He answers prayer, that Jesus died on Calvary's cross to provide salvation for all and then relate yourself to these assumptions in such a way that you test them in your own experience.

Let me tell you that your doubts will go, your faith will grow and you will have the Christian experience that you desire. I know, for I tell you this from my experience.

May God lead us all to an acquaintance with Him which will be rewarding in every age of life.

Who Will Go for Us?

What joy could possibly be greater than that which comes from being a "fisher of men"! I admit that I may be biased, but after 25 years in the ministry, I can state that I cannot imagine a more rewarding, satisfying or joyous work in all the world.

Obviously not everyone can become a minister. However, perhaps we should endeavor to encourage more young men to think along the lines of the ministry. The needs are so great, the harvest fields are so white, and unfortunately there are not enough ministers to go around. If you are a young man trying to decide what to do with your life, pray that God will lead you to just the place which He has for you, and do not overlook or discount the possibility that it might be the ministry.

Long ago, when the prophet Isaiah first found the experience of conversion, it seemed that he heard the mind of God saying to him, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" In other words, whom shall I send to take my message of hope to the world? The Scriptures tell us that Isaiah replied unhesitatingly, "Here am I, send me." And God marvelously blessed his tremendously fruitful ministry as he dedicated his life unreservedly to working for lost souls.

God has a place in His service for every dedicated man and woman. He wants to use your talents, your time, your abilities in helping others. There is nothing more rewarding in all of a man's life than realizing that God has used him to some degree to help some poor struggling soul take courage as he continues the uneven battle of life.

Some may shrink from the ministry because they think they are not good enough. A minister has not achieved perfection. He has the same problems with the same arch-enemy of our souls that every other human being has. Do not therefore think that you are not good enough to work for God. In a sense, it is a good thing that a minister does know from experience how great the battle with sin is, for only then will he be able to sympathize with others who are tempted and struggling. Many an individual has been most