

"THE SUFFICIENCY OF JESUS CHRIST"

Luke 7:20

Question in this text was asked by John the Baptist during imprisonment. This rugged man of God had been cast into prison by King Herod because he dared to rebuke him for his sins.

As John lay in prison, doubts crept into his heart, wondered if he could have been mistaken -- was it possible Jesus was not the Christ?

Finally he sent two of his Disciples to Jesus with this question -- "Art Thou He that should come? Or look we for another?"

We live today amid conditions that cause many to fall into doubts. There is confusion and strife through out the world -- the forces of evil seem to be triumphant.

Spiritual experience has given way to external form and the question arise -- is Christ sufficient for the world's needs, or look we for another.

I. IS THE GOSPEL SUFFICIENT FOR THE NEEDS OF THE HUMAN SOUL?

Shall we look for something else?

What are the needs of the human soul? Man are confronted by sin, sorrow, suffering - trouble and death.

Under guilt of sin men cry for pardon -- long for victory.

In sorrows of life "cry for comfort".

Men in suffering, look for relief.

People in trouble, cry out for help.

In the face of death, cry for light and hope.

Is the Gospel sufficient for these needs?

Much of the religion today in all honesty is not sufficient. It does not meet the soul's needs!

But the Gospel of Christ in its (New Testament) purity and power does meet these needs. To every soul who has tried it, there is a positive "yes" it is sufficient.

The Gospel offers a sure remedy for the guilt of sin. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Isaiah 1:18 offers "Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

We think of sin as being black but here it is referred to as being scarlet or red.

An expert in the dyeing field has said the most difficult color to deal with in any process of dyeing is crimson or scarlet. He said that black can be dyed with comparative ease. It is red that is most difficult to get out. The material will take a new tint for a little while, but later the red reveals itself.

God speaks of man's sins as being scarlet. But his promise "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. The Gospel of Jesus Christ

offers a remedy for any and all sin.

The Gospel does offer a power that will break the bonds of sin and give victory to the trusting soul. "Sin shall not have dominion over you." Jesus does not cleanse a soul from sin and then leave it in helplessness.

*U.N.C. Med School Developed new method Blood test conducted persons who die in Auto Accidents
Dr. Arthur McBray (Prof) chief state pathology checked (Oct 78 to Oct 79) tested 169 persons*

A man was converted from the bondage of strong drink. He went forth to give his testimony telling how the power of Christ is able to save and keep. A former friend could not understand the change. Finally said, "You must have tried the Keeley care." No, said the other, "I tried the Calvary cure." All other cures fail but Calvary succeeds, breaks the power of sin in the life and gives victory.

2/3 had enough Alcohol in Blood legally drunk 10 of them use trace Marijuana

The Gospel of Christ does bring comfort in life's great sorrows.

Dr. Basil Manly, great preacher, ^{center of} one of children very sick. It was time for the State Baptist Meeting and for some very important reason he felt that he ought to be present. He and his wife prayed for guidance and they decided he must go. All matters at the convention were settled in a satisfactory manner. Dr. Manly returned home. When he arrived he found the little boy had died and had been buried. It was hard for him to get up and preach on Sunday. He went to God for help and never did he preach with greater power. He took as his text those words of Jacob - Gen. 43:14. "If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved." His own heart was comforted and his message brought comfort to the hearts of others.

Sixty years later Mrs. Manly wrote a letter to a young woman who had lost a child. In that letter she told the story of the loss that had come to her home sixty years before. She said, "The Lord was with us and strengthened us for our duties, I can truly say that he comforted us, and has ever been a tender,

loving Father. Never doubt his tender mercies, my child, but trust him, and he will sustain and comfort you. "Thousands can testify with her of the comforting power of Christ in the sorrows of life.

The Gospel of Christ does offer relief in the sufferings of life and it does give help in the troubles that come.

Frederick Arnold was writing the life of F. W. Robertson. He went to Brighton to collect some stories from the older inhabitants of the place. He went into a book store and engaged the proprietor in conversation concerning the great man of God. The book seller to him into a back room and pointed to a picture of Robertson hanging on the wall.

"You see that picture! When I am tempted, I run into this little parlor, look at that face and overcome the temptation. When I find myself the victim of dispondency, I come here and look at Robertson's face, and that despondency goes. Whenever I'm afraid of meeting a difficulty, I come and look into his eyes, and they put new power into me."

If a look at the face of a picture of a man, who has been transformed by the power of Christ, could so strengthen and help this old book seller, what must it be to look into the face of the living Christ!

I read the story of an 88 year old lady in Greensboro, N. C. She taught in the city schools when young. But a terrible disease, creeping paralysis, laid its hand on her frail body. She had to give up her work. Moved to the country to make her home with her niece. Not long after, the niece died, leaving a house full of little children. The youngest of which was a boy three months old.

We carried the mother's body to rest. People were wondering what would become

of home and a group of children and a paralyzed woman.

That little woman answered the question. She took that baby boy in her trembling arms and nursed him, she saw those children grown to manhood and womanhood and take their place in life.

The paralyzed woman was still at the house and her body shakes in every muscle.

Her pastor visited and read from the Bible and prayed. She said, "Pastor, I want to say this to you. The pathway over which I have come has been long and hard. Sometimes I could not see the way ahead. But now the pathway ahead shines more and more unto the dawning of the perfect day."

The Gospel gives help in the experiences of life.

It happened in First Baptist Church, Newport, Ky. A little girl confessed Christ and was baptized. Few months later she was ill with burning fever. Her pastor visited and she said, "Won't you sing, 'In The Sweet By And By'?"

So he sang as best he could "There's a land that is fairer than day!" -- she joined in the chorus, with her dying lips. In a little while she had gone to that land fairer than day.

II. IS THE GOSPEL SUFFICIENT FOR THE (WORLD'S PROBLEMS) OR MUST MEN LOOK ELSEWHERE?

The very life of the nation is being threatened today.

We must take Christ to the market place of life.

iel Old Monk wanted to get away from noisy multitudes of the street. Climbed to a little room in the spire of the church building and began calling upon Christ. But that fellowship for which he longed was not there. At last, he cried out, "O Christ, where art thou?" The answer came from the crowded street below, "Here I am in the midst of the surging multitude."

Principles of Christ cannot be put in practice in the world unless the love of Christ is in the heart.

oll Like the art student in a Florentine gallery trying to copy one of Raphael's masterpieces. Day after day he worked on his canvass -- stood back to compare it with the original. There was disappointment, taking it with a brush, he doubted over the face of his picture. "How can I do what Raphael has done without the mind of Raphael."

III. IS THE GOSPEL SUFFICIENT FOR THE PROGRAM OF THE CHURCH OR SHALL WE LOOK FOR SOMETHING ELSE?

Sad -- we have come to depend on something else.

An organization - programs - money = human effort. The Gospel was sufficient with the band Jesus left on earth to carry out his ministry. They went through out the Roman Empire.

In the Middle Ages Martin Luther leaned upon God. It is sufficient today if the church will give it a trial.

From prison John sent the question "Art thou He that should come or look we for

another?"

Is Christ sufficient?

Johnstown Flood -- You have read how the dam above the city broke and waters came rolling down the valley sweeping houses and human lives away.

Bishop Leonard tells of an experience which came to the people of Johnstown a few years later.

There had been torrential rains - a rumor came to the valley that the dam was going to give way again.

People were filled with fright and made preparations to flee.

The engineer who built the dam said, "It is not true. I built it and know every bit of the material and workmanship that went into it. It will bear any pressure of water. He drove up the valley, parked his car at the base of the dam, and cried "The dam will hold. It is not breaking."

In the midst of world conditions -- with confusion, uncertainty -- the church falters. The world is saying Christianity has failed. Men do not know where to flee.

Christ comes and stands in our midst and said the Gospel will not break. I made it. I put my blood on Calvary's cross. The hope of the resurrection will not fail.