

Joys of the Seeking Man

by Timothy Abraham

Last time, in our previous article, I shared how life was birthed out of death. Expression was given to life in the fullness of God's knowledge. In the past, I knew Him in part or as the Prophet Job would say, "All these years I have heard about you, but now my eyes have seen You!" The fullness of God's knowledge happens only in the course of our reconciliation, thus He Himself reveals Himself fully to our hearts. An alien cannot know who the Possessor of the universe is. Only a member of the household can. Jesus Christ came to reconcile us, when we were once aliens and enemies, and hitherto we have become friends with God. We are no longer receiving slave treatment, but royal treatment since through Christ we become children of God.

I experienced what a "spoiled child" of God would: God would give me anything I ask for in prayer. But then the Lord wanted me to love Him and worship Him for His own sake, not for what I get from Him. I tried to keep my faith secret and so was baptized secretly in a pastor's house.

Filled with the joy of salvation I could not hide or deny Christ anymore. Therefore, when my childhood friend asked me if Christ was crucified, I answered, "Yes!" and explained why. He prayed with me to receive Christ. He was shaking and perspiring every time he prayed with me. He could see how mighty the name of our Lord Jesus was. My former leaders in the Islamic fanatical group, desiring to know who the spearhead was, threatened to kill him if he would not tell them everything about my evangelism. Sadly, he betrayed me and I was beaten up in front of the mosque where I had formerly preached Islam zealously. In their sight I was a blasphemous infidel who deserved to be killed unless I would recant. They regarded my conversion as the most horrendous form of desecrating Islam and the Quran.

Since my secret conversion was now made public and Muslims plotted to kill me, I had to flee. I was hunted by Muslims from my village in the Delta, to Ismailia until I arrived in Cairo where my Christian friends lived. Yet Christians were not willing to shelter me and I had to go back to the village, seeking refuge in His protective hands. I came back from Cairo and found an angry mob of Muslims filling up our house. My mother was wearing the garment of mourning, dressed in black as is the custom in Egypt. To them by deserting Islam, I was dead!!! Muslim women yelled at me, "Your mother doesn't deserve all this from you. Why cause her all this grief?" Another woman lamented, "Poor mother! Her son left her for the Christian infidels. If I were her, I would kill my son for running after the infidels like a dog." I received a letter from a friend in Jordan who reported that my father was walking down the streets in Jordan weeping bitterly as Muslim laborers there reproached him severely. He stayed sick in bed for a month because of this until he and I talked on the phone.

It is absolutely unforgettable that outraged Muslims broke into our house barbarically. My mother knelt down at the feet of our neighbor "Sayed" begging him to spare my life and kill her instead. In such indescribable agony, my mother disowned and disinherited me before all people in my village. I love my mother more dearly than any person in this world, but no human power, regardless of how gigantic it is, can separate me from the love of Christ. I will always live for Jesus.

My Bible, all my Christian books, and music tapes were confiscated and burnt. I de-

cided to flee from the Delta region to Cairo. Even though the police were tracking me down, the Lord blinded their eyes and protected me. In Cairo, I was hiding at M.'s, an Egyptian Baptist friend who was comforting me all the time. I broke down when he read,

“So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name” (Acts 5:41)

I am grateful to God for providing this friend, M., who disciplined me, teaching me to live a victorious life rich in worship and thanksgiving. He gave me a pocket Arabic New Testament and told me frankly that his parents were afraid. Also I was told that if they continued to hide me they would be in jail forever. I had nowhere to go. So, upon the advice of my secret pastor, I went back to the village, hiding the Arabic New Testament in my socks, praying that it would not fall out. I was eventually arrested and released repeatedly. I learned what it means to have God as my only Hiding Place. In prison, my Savior knows I have come to experience true peace. I was not shaken because I saw Christ in prison, not myself. I sang songs of joy in the midst of tears, anticipating the shining Morning Star to come and deliver me. I decided to hide the Bible in a place where the police could not confiscate it — in my heart by memorizing it. I have since made it a habit to sleep with my Bible by my side. Five years later, I managed to flee Muslims' attempts to kill me and I was shocked to find out that there are some professing Christians in America who attack the Bible for which I was willing to die. God's word has given me promises of faith which I apply as a little child and pray them through in confidence. The gates of Heaven open as we pray through God's Word. His word speaks life!!!

Once when I went to give my mother a Mother's Day gift, she asked me rhetorically, “Mother's Day gift?” I answered, “Yes” every time she repeated the question. She looked at me with such crushing grief and said, “My son, whom I waited 15 years to have and finally was born is now dead. I disown you till the day of judgment, Ibrahim.” I cried but Christ touched my heart and said, “I am your family now! I am your father, brother, mother, sister, friend, and everything to you, Timothy, now.” I cannot forget those days when my mother would call the police to arrest me. She even went to a witch to put a curse on me and bring me back to the fold of Islam. The witch said, “Your son is following a path which he will never forsake and he will be victorious all his life as long as he walks in it.” These words, from the mouth of a witch, brought my younger brother to know Christ. The testimony of demons about our victorious Lord renders skepticism and unbelief absurd (Please read Romans 8:35-39). You also can be more than a conqueror through Christ, your Victor who loves you! Believe it!