

**ACF NEWSLETTER**

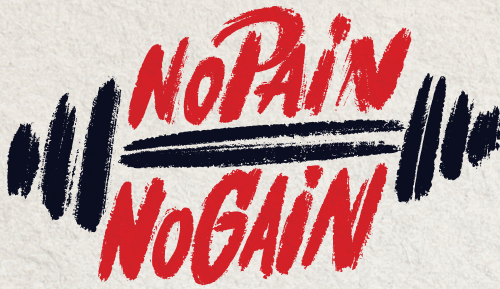
Issue 16 Spring 2023

# HOPE



**Achinleck**  
**CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP**  
*Serving Christ, Serving the Community*





I've been thinking a lot recently about passing through pain in order to gain something. Before Covid, I used to be an active gym goer, and regularly pushed my body through pain in order to **gain a better level of fitness**. However, after my recent fracture, I was pushing through pain so that I could **gain back flexibility** in my wrist. God willing, in a few weeks, I'll be

pushing through the pain of surgery, to transplant another tendon in my thumb, and post-op exercises, to **gain the function of my hand**.

This has all caused me to think of the agony and pain that Jesus endured at Calvary. Was there any gain from His pain? We read in Isaiah 53.3:- "He was despised and rejected of men - a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. We turned our backs on Him and looked the other way. He was despised and we did not care". Vs 5:- "But He was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed." vs7:- "He was oppressed and treated harshly, yet He never said a word. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep is silent before the shearers, He did not open his mouth."

The Bible informs us He was stripped and flogged with what was probably a lead-tipped whip, a crown of thorns was pressed onto His head. He was ridiculed, spat on and beaten. He had large nails hammered through His hands and feet, and, as His body hung on the cross, in full view of the citizens of Jerusalem, all His bones were out of joint. His beard had been torn from His face and in Isaiah 52:14 we learn, "**Many were amazed when they saw Him. His face was so disfigured He seemed hardly human, and from His appearance, one would scarcely know He was a man.**"

The cruelty that was inflicted by men upon the Lord Jesus was indescribable. Yet Jesus knew all this was going to happen. He knew exactly the pain and suffering He would endure at Calvary and indeed He had come into the world with the purpose of suffering and dying on the cross. However, He not only suffered terribly from the hands of men, but during three hours of darkness, while He hung on the cross, He suffered at the hands of God. God, **His Father, punished Him in those three hours on account of sin**. He, a perfect sinless man, became sin and endured punishment for sin. His suffering in these three hours was so awful that **God chose to clothe the world in darkness**, as it would have been far too dreadful for human eyes to witness.

It was all so horrific. No words can really describe it – such horror, such excruciating agony. Every part of His body was affected



by what He suffered. There was no relief and there was nobody to comfort Him. **He was all alone in His agony!**

**Was there any gain from His pain?** Was it all meaningless? Was there any point to it? Why did He come into the world to suffer?

Amazingly, there was, and is, a gain from His pain for the Lord Jesus Himself, and for me. **Through His pain He gained me, and I gained Him.** How wonderful it is to know that Jesus thought gaining me, was worth all that pain and suffering.

What do I mean by that? How does Christ gain us, and we gain Him, through his suffering? Well, there is a big problem in our lives which separates us from the Lord – it is SIN!! **Sin is a horrible, evil thing that is part of our nature and**

**causes us to do all the wrong stuff that we do.** Sin prevents us from having a relationship with God and knowing Jesus Christ personally in our lives. But **through Christ's death my sins are forgiven.** He bore the punishment for my sin on the cross and because of His suffering and sacrifice I now have a living relationship with Him. The good news is that everyone who believes in Him and asks God to forgive them, for their sins, can likewise be part of Jesus' gain from His pain..

**The pain was His but the gain can be forgiveness for you.**

*"Because of the joy awaiting him (a relationship with us) he endured the cross, disregarding it's shame."*  
**Hebrews 12:2**

How deep the Father's love for us,  
How vast beyond all measure,  
That He should give His only Son  
To make a wretch His treasure.  
How great the pain of searing loss –  
The Father turns His face away,  
As wounds which mar the Chosen One  
Bring many sons to glory.

Behold the man upon a cross,  
My sin upon His shoulders;  
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice  
Call out among the scoffers.  
It was my sin that held Him there  
Until it was accomplished;  
His dying breath has brought me life –  
I know that it is finished.

I will not boast in anything,  
No gifts, no power, no wisdom;  
But I will boast in Jesus Christ,  
His death and resurrection.  
Why should I gain from His reward?  
I cannot give an answer;  
But this I know with all my heart –  
His wounds have paid my ransom.

Stuart Townend





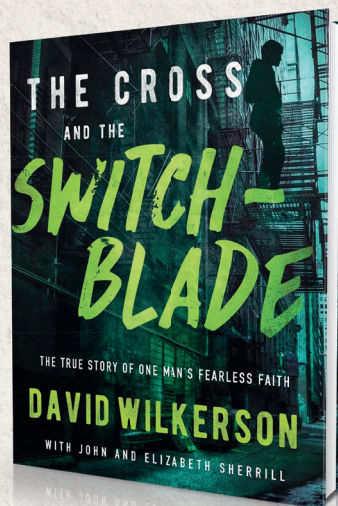
# MEET A MEMBER

## CALEB'S TESTIMONY

This is my testimony, from death to life.

I trusted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour in October 2012, at the age of nine. It was shortly after we had been on a family holiday with some other Christian families. During the week we had been learning about a notorious gangster called Nicky Cruz. He became a Christian after hearing the message about Jesus, and his life dramatically changed. **This man's testimony challenged me to trust**

**Jesus for myself.** You can read about him in the book, "The Cross and the Switchblade" by David Wilkerson or in "Run Baby Run" by Nicky Cruz himself. (There are also films with the same titles that you can watch.)



Being so young, I must confess that, I never fully appreciated the true impact of this experience. Fast forward to 2023, I am now 19 and in recent months the impact of the salvation I experienced as a 9-year-old has become much more of a reality in my life.

Previously, when, people have asked, why I believe what I believe? I have found it difficult to give a satisfactory answer. Often, I responded by saying, "What do I have to lose by living my life following God". Over the last few months, however, **I've felt my faith in Christ grow** and I have started to realise what I would lose if I didn't live my life following God. I began to appreciate that when I put God first in my life, I am happier and feel more fulfilled, I am a better person to be around, and I have an overwhelming sense of peace.

For years when I told people I was a Christian, the only difference between me and them was that I went to church, and they didn't. Now the difference is, **I have a relationship with a Father in heaven** and have confidence in an Almighty God, who sent his only beloved Son to die on the cross at Calvary for me. The same God sent His only Son to die for you too.

I was once dead in my sin and lost for all eternity, but the blood of Jesus Christ has bought me and brought me near to God. I can wake up every



morning with the confidence that wherever I go, I am not alone. Will you join me by accepting Jesus and walking the path to eternal glory with Him? Or will you stay lost in your sins and be lost for eternity? The Bible says, "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" but it also says, "For God so loved the world that he gave His only Son that whosoever believes in Him may have eternal Life". The word whosoever, means me and it means you. **"Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation"**! I was only 9 when I trusted Him, what is stopping you trusting Him now?

You are invited to  
come along to our

# Easter

SERVICE

Easter Sunday  
9th April  
12.30pm

# Special Gospel Meetings

The Community  
Hub, Furnace Road  
Muirkirk

From 16th to  
28th April





# RESURRECTION

Recently my wife and I took a walk around the Dumfries House estate. It was a few weeks since we were last there, and things now appeared so much different. The previous time, everything was pretty drab and dead looking, but this time there was very clear signs of new life and vibrant colours. **The evidence of resurrection was everywhere** -- snowdrops, daffodils, etc. blooming around the edges of the grassy areas. What had gone into the ground and died was now suddenly blossoming again. There was no evidence of them a few weeks ago as they were buried but now they were there for all to see.

As I considered the evidence of resurrection in front of our eyes I thought of the words of the Lord Jesus Christ in John 12.24 :- **"Very truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds."**

The Lord Jesus was referring to Himself when He spoke these words. Before this statement He had said, "The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified." (John 12.23) He wasn't thinking of a 60 minute hour but He was thinking of a momentous event, or more correctly, **a series of momentous events, that were about to take place which would change everything for Him and for the whole of human history.** Before Him lay His death, the awfulness of which was discussed in our previous article, but beyond His death, He anticipated His resurrection and, after that, His glorious ascension back to heaven. Notice in His analogy the Lord Jesus indicates that **what comes out of the ground is more in number than what goes in** – one grain of wheat becomes many!! In this He is thinking of the fruit of His resurrection which will only be seen fully in a day to come.

So, He likens Himself to a grain of wheat – singular, solitary, and unique. The Lord Jesus, as a man on earth was unique – **He was one of a kind. He was a man of a different order.** A perfect man, a man without sin. He lived His life in constant fellowship with His Father in heaven. **He was what God intended all men to be and He enjoyed what God intended all men to enjoy.** Sadly, because of sin, man's disobedience and rebellion against God, all men have become separated from God and live their life in a state of sin – **their behaviour being determined by their nature.** The Bible informs us that, "Surely we were sinful at birth, sinful from the time our mothers conceived us." Psalm 51.5. Sin is hereditary and it came into the human race soon after its inception and the consequence of sin is death. Romans 5:12 :- **"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"**



One of the purposes of Christ's coming into the world, dying on the cross, rising from the dead and ascending back to heaven was to make it **possible for others to share in His life and His relationship with His Father**. That is what we learn from His analogy in the verse we are considering. The grain of wheat has at its very core the germ of life. In John 1:4, we read, "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men." He said in John 10:10, **"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."** So, the life He uniquely has in Himself, He desires to impart to others. Just like the single grain of wheat, it goes into the ground and dies but then a harvest of grains of wheat comes forth – each as a result of the death of the initial grain and **all sharing the life of the grain that went into the ground and died!!**

Paul writes to Christians in Corinth and has a whole chapter on resurrection. Here are some excerpts from it. 1 Corinthians 15:20-23 :- "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the **firstfruits** of them that slept." For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the **firstfruits**; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."

1 Corinthians 15:45-49 :- "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a life-giving spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

**Through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ we can be part of the great "harvest" of folks that share in His life now – this life is referred to as eternal and abundant – and we can also look forward to being resurrected to a glorious life with Him in heaven for ever. In addition through Him, and the indwelling of His Holy Spirit we can enjoy presently fellowship with God.**








**FOOD BANK**

**Are you finding it difficult to make ends meet?**  
 We provide a food bank in the hall at Park Road at 2pm every Thursday & at The Hub, Furnace Rd Muirkirk at 11am every Friday

## Good News Service

@ 12.30 Every Sunday  
 (all ages welcome)



**Auchinleck-Christian-Fellowship**

**YouTube**  
 AChrisianF



**Friday @ 9.30 - 11.00**  
 (term time only)  
 Please contact Ruth on  
**07940 355 882**  
 for details.

**For times of other meetings see website**

## CONTACT DETAILS

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