

CHRIST . . . and the requirements of the new Life
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(LUKE 7: 15; 8: 55; JOHN 11: 44)

The apostle Paul said, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. 3: 1, 2). This was the best advice ever given to converts, for it was to be expected that when they renounced the old life, the characteristics of the new would be seen daily in their actions. The requirements of the new life are clearly illustrated in the miracles of the Saviour. The Gospel record contains three accounts of His raising the dead ; and when these Scriptures are compared, an interesting sequence of thought is discovered.

Confession - Converts should learn to talk for Christ

The city street was strangely hushed ; it was a place of mourning. The people watched the sad procession making its way toward the cemetery ; and all grieved, for they knew this was the second time death had devastated the same home. First, the husband had been taken ; and now the sorrowing widow had lost her only son. She was haggard ; she moved as one in a daze, as she followed the bier. The bystanders waited until the funeral had passed, then they too continued their journey. " Now when Jesus was come nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her." Slowly He moved across to her side, and gently resting His hand upon her shoulder, He whispered, "Mother, don't cry." "And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare the young man stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead, sat up, and began to speak." Resurrection joys would have been marred if the young man had remained dumb for ever. He had a story to tell ; and furthermore, it was his duty to tell it.

Communion - Converts should feed on the Bread of Life

The scene in the bedroom was heart-breaking ; the little girl was dead. The mother's anguish was pitiable ; sobs shook her body. Those who stood near furtively dabbed their eyes , this was a tragedy ; the girl was only twelve years of age. And then the door opened to admit Jairus, the girl's father. He had brought Jesus and three disciples. Momentarily the ruler of the synagogue was overcome ; his daughter had been the joy of his life. The three disciples silently watched as their Master went across to the bedside, to say, " Little girl, Wake up." They were thrilled when the color commenced to come back into the ashen cheeks. They saw the eyelids flicker, and then quite suddenly the child was smiling. " And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat." " Mother," He said, " Give her something to eat. She is hungry, and needs food." In like manner, all who have risen with Christ need spiritual nourishment in order that their health may be maintained. (i) They must feed on the word of God. (ii) They must enjoy fellowship with the people of God. (iii) They must know intimate communion with the Son of God.

Consecration-Converts should walk in newness of life

Lazarus had been in his grave four days, and the hearts of his sisters were very sore as they stood before the

CHRIST . . . and the requirements of the new Life sepulchre. They had brought Jesus to see the grave. Suddenly the Lord raised His voice and said, "Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go." Had Lazarus remained in his graveclothes, the liberty of the new life would have been seriously curtailed. How could he walk when his feet were tied? How could he work when his hands were bound? How could he speak distinctly when a cloth held his jaws in a vice? The Lord said, " Loose him, and let him go." It was a similar thought which prompted Paul to send his message to the Colossians. Worldliness hinders the freedom of the Spirit. It is the duty of the saint to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and to run with patience the race that is set before us " (Heb. 12: 1). In this way the Christian consummates his confession and communion. When he shakes off the garments of the old life, he is capable of surrendering his feet, hands, and lips, to do the will of God. " If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." There should never be any three-legged race in the Christian experience!

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