

FROM
The Cemetery
To LIFE



A Testimony of the power of God
By
An ex-down and out foreigner.

Basilis & Benjie

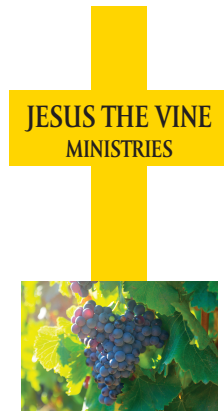


“all the days ordained for me
were written in your book
before one of them came to be”

Psalm 139 v 16

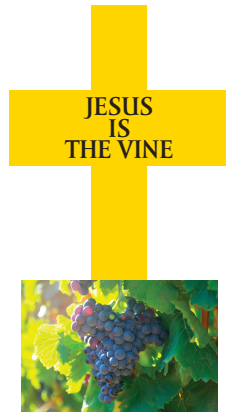
**This pamphlet was published by
Basilis Nikolakos, an Evangelist.**

**For the Glory of God the Father through the
Name of Jesus Christ to whom be glory forever.
Amen.**



**Any copying and reproduction by anyone of any part of this
pamphlet –except the logo– is most welcome.**

tiarna.iosa@gmail.com



“For God so loved the world,
that he gave his one and only son,
that whoever believes in him shall not perish
but have everlasting life.”

(John 3 v 16)

Prologue

My name is Vasilis Nikolakos. I am a Greek living in Ireland. I first came to Galway City, Ireland, in March of 1970 working in a ship as an engineer. I came back in 1974 and settled permanently in 1979. I was a heavy gambler and smoker and very soon I was totally broke and started living rough.

In March 1994 I answered the call of Christ and accepted Him to be my Lord and Saviour and today I am a non-denominational Christian.

Some people today call me “brainwashed” but as I take exception to half-truths, I correct them by replying that I am not only brain washed but also head washed, body washed, hands washed, feet washed even past washed with the blood of Jesus the Lord, the Saviour of the whole World’s and mine.

Some others say that I am a “fruit cake”! Fair enough. I much prefer it to be so than the “plain cake” I used to be at the time I was away from God. Sick, broke, homeless living rough and spending quite a few nights in a cemetery next - of all places - to the then Bord Fáilte (Irish Tourism) building. Come to think of it, not only the nights but even my days at that time were -if not worse - nothing to write home about either. Today being in Christ and having the fruit of the Holy Spirit’s in me I have become a “fruit cake.”

Praise God for that.

For methinks that if, when I was “reasonable” I ended up being miserable and now that I am “mad” I am the happiest I’ve ever been in my life, then I will stick with this kind of “madness”. And I won’t stop giving all Glory and thanks to Jesus Christ, my God, Lord and Saviour, Amen.

Past

When I was 11 years old some friends and I went to the movies and saw the film "prodigal son." Someone said that I looked like Yul Brynner (who was playing the title role) and so I would grow to become a prodigal as well. After that the nick-name " "prodigal" stuck and I was called the "prodigal" ever since. Even worse when I grew older, I fulfilled the prophesy and became and lived as a real prodigal Son, OK.

Indeed when I became 21 years old my father died and I received a portion of a quite large inheritance. The fact that I had or should have any portion let alone such a large one was disputed by my brothers mainly the eldest.

The 'funny' thing is that my eldest brother- Peter- was the first amongst my first "catch of men" in 1995, at my first foray in Greece as a Christian evangelist. The others were an uncle, 4 sisters in law and a nephew and his girl friend that gave their life to the Lord at that time.

I must explain so you can understand this reluctance of my brothers to allow me to have any family money. I am the youngest of five brothers; indeed I am 25 years younger than my eldest brother and 14 years younger than the fourth one. My brothers and my parents did face difficult times, what with the misery of the Second World War and the Greek Civil one that followed immediately after that, and what with the poverty and struggles such things bring to people. And my family did work hard to just survive let alone to make such a big property that they succeeded in making. And it is true that my contribution towards such riches was minimal if not zero.

So according to my brothers, since I had contributed nothing in the creation of the property I should not have any part of it. Nevertheless the Law is the law and if it says that I was eligible to a portion to this inheritance I was not going to argue with anybody let alone the Law for such a windfall.

That was in 1968 and by 1982 I was totally bankrupt. I had lost all and everything in gambling. I was bankrupt. "Fast women and slow horses" as someone put it.

It all started so well, does it not always? The first time I gambled on horses - that was in 1974- I won 36 times the money I had invested to begin with. The next time I won even more. I lived for nearly nine months without spending any money of my capital but out of my winnings. I thought I had discovered the secret of life, "Gambling." I even used mathematic equations in my pursuit of making money out of it.

In 1979 I got married. It lasted 6 months. Gambling by that time was more than a profession; it had become the obsession and the ruin of my life. My marriage broke down. The most of my friends deserted me - of course it was my fault and nobody else's. On the top of all I owed more money than I could ever repay and in order to borrow money I had to use lies and many times fraudulent means. In two years flat, I was homeless and living under bridges or in the bus station and occasionally in the homeless men's hostel in Fairgreen. I spent quite a few nights in the cemetery behind the Reformed Presbyterian Church next to the Victoria hotel which was next to 'bord Fáilte'(Tourist office) of all places. Some people ask me how it was to live in a cemetery; "Very quiet" I reply.

I found a job in a hotel as a kitchen porter, but it was used to finance my addiction. The most of the weeks in the space of 3 hours after getting paid I had no money left. I had lost it all in the bookies. On the top of it all I was smoking 80 cigarettes a day. I was going around in the city at the early hours of the morning and I was searching the rubbish bags that the pubs and discos were leaving outside their doors for the rubbish truck, and I was looking for fags inside, any butt would do. The fact that these butts had been swept -many of them- from the toilets was not any problem with me. For how could my sickness get worse than it was already? I was going nearly every fortnight in the hospital with chest pains.

Panic attacks were one thing, pains in my stomach another, gastritis (H pylori), arthritis even piles yet one more. I must have by now one of the thickest if not the thickest file of any patient, that exists in the Galway University Hospital.

I remember that there was a Christmas period that I had not eaten for 3 days and before that for 4 more days still. I still remember the evening that someone gave me a pound to go buy a sandwich and I kept the money until next morning where I put and lost it in the first race of the day.

Today when I hear people saying, "When you reach the bottom there is only one way to go and that is up, I smile with the ignorance of the person that makes such a statement and I pray that they will never find -first hand- how wrong they are. For everyone that has reached the bottom knows that the only way to go is not up but sideways, scraping the bottom with your belly without any hope and nobody being able to help you to get up on your knees let alone on your feet. If you could get up you would not have gone to the bottom in the first place. You walk around with glazed look but you don't take anything in. There is no spark in your eyes for there is no hope in your life. Every day is like the day before and you know that the next day will be like the today, no hope, no life, no nothing. You start hating everybody because you hate yourself first. You welcome fights. You don't mind getting involved in any fights with no matter whom - anybody would do, even the pain and the bruises that go with a fight is welcome! For even a fight is a diversion and a break from the hopelensness and void you feel inside you.

I remember that my dream at the time, the best I could wish for, my ideal; was that I would get a one bedroom flat from the Corporation and so I could die there and not as a dog in the street, (come to think of it; in today's society dogs don't die alone in the street anymore, only people still do.) The soonest the better I thought rather than living this kind of life.

Salvation

Around September of 1993, I met Jean and Donald — a Christian couple who started talking to me about Jesus Christ and how much He loved the World - including myself. In the beginning I wanted to beat them up, after I thought that maybe I could get some money from them if I would play along pretending that I was interested in their “waffle.”

“God” thought I, “what God? Where was He when I was hurting and still am? Leave me alone with God. Last thing I want to hear about is God. If He exists He is “a bad God” and I had no time for Him. But they kept on and on and they seemed to be very convinced that God was a good God. They even enrolled me in faith— without my knowledge - in a bible school that had just opened in the City.

That was in the beginning of March of 1994. I prayed and asked Jesus to come into my life and be my saviour and Lord to please Vivanae - the woman in charge of the school - who knows I thought, maybe she would give us a few quid for that. But otherwise nothing changed, not I anyway.

In the nights of the 28th 29th, 30th of that month I saw a dream --the same dream every night. I saw that I was standing at the edge of a cliff, darkness was around and I could hear a voice calling me to go to him who was over the edge of the cliff into the darkness. For the first two nights I woke up in a sweat refusing to accept the invitation; it was very long distance down and even in my dream I did not want to commit suicide.

But in the third night I felt so empty inside me and so lonely that I did go over the cliff towards the voice and I was really surprised to find that the darkness lifted and what I thought that was the edge of a cliff was nothing else but a new road leading to a bright valley.

Next morning, Thursday, at 10.25 in the morning I prayed again asking Jesus to come in my heart and life and to do what He liked with it – such as it was. But this time I prayed with real desire and real wish and free volition for this Jesus who died for me, to come in my life and help me, any help would do. Immediately I felt a heat all over my body and at that moment I lost the craving for tobacco. I could not even bear the smell of tobacco and dazed as I was I started looking around to find out where it was coming from. It took me a few minutes to realize that it was myself who was giving out that sickening smell of nicotine.

I never felt the need to smoke again.

Some people say that I used my will power to give up smoking. Well, all I have to say is that I started smoking when I was eleven years old.

When I reached smoking 20 cigarettes a day I tried to give it up and I ended up smoking forty a day. Then I tried to give it up again and I ended up smoking sixty a day. Again I tried to give up smoking and I finished smoking eighty cigarettes a day. Some will power!

I remember that when I told some people that I smoked no more, they laughed and said that they would give me a week, ten days the most, and I would be smoking again. They asked since I was a person that used to “eat” tobacco, how on Earth could I live without it now? Well I did try to explain that I did not give up smoking using will power or any magic, but that I had lost the craving - the desire for nicotine after prayer, just like that. When the heat had gone from my body not only I hadn’t had any desire to smoke but I really detested even the smell let alone the taste of the thing. It had nothing to do with my will power or me. Still they did not believe me. Fine.

Today 13 years later, I still detest smoking as much as that day, but even now that my words are proven right they still laugh, only this time they laugh on the account that I am “mad.”

Thanks God that I don’t look for acceptance from any person otherwise I would have gone really mad with all the accusations that have been thrown at me all these years.

Funnier things started happening, like 3 weeks later I stopped gambling and never felt like doing so again. I remember what happened like it was today.

I went into a bookmaker's office to put a bet. I told the clerk the 2 horses I wanted to put money on. Both were running in England, the one at 2.05 pm in Salisbury England and the other horse in a meeting taking place in Bath in Wales at 2.20pm.

The clerk looked at me with wonderment and thought I was joking but because I was known to be capable of turning violent he was very careful to explain in a nice manner that he could not understand my language.

I repeated my request to him and I even pointed the two horses on the sheets on the wall at the respective times and meetings. Still he could not understand me and I was ready to lash out at him when I noticed that the other customers were looking at me smiling like I was being funny. So I repeated once more my request and to my great fear I heard my self speaking gibberish or if you like speaking in a language that I didn't know or hadn't heard before and I definitely could not understand. I took a deep breath and tried to think clearly and to speak slowly and clearly but there it was again, the same unknown words and sounds coming out of my mouth. Worse still I started feeling sick. I got afraid, panicked and run out of the bookies and started going towards the Bible School. I needed reassuring that all was ok if you speak in tongues. By chance I saw Donald the man who befriended me in the beginning, coming along as he was going to the Bible School himself and I asked him if he speaks in 'tongues' as the Born Again Christians call it. He said that he did and so I asked him if he gets scared of doing so and he said "no? So why was I scared? I don't know. All I know is that for the next 3 weeks I would not go into a bookmakers office which it was amazing really. For here was I who had spend my last 15 years going into the bookies at 10 o'clock in the morning and leaving after the last race of the day, that is 6 pm or even later than that in the evening. Still here was I staying away, not daring to pass outside let alone

to go into a bookmaker's office for 3 weeks. The good thing was that I even had money enough to rent a room in a house so I could sleep in a bed. I remember that in the end of these 3 weeks, I was in a pub and I was watching racing from Ascot I think it was. I saw a horse named "General George" and I had a strong feeling that he was going to win that race. So I asked the barman to lend me a fiver and I put it on that horse. Funnily enough the horse won. And even more funnily I started crying, I felt desperate and stupid. In these 3 weeks I had been so happy I had not gambled at all and I thought I had got rid of the demon of gambling and here I was again gambling once again. I felt so low that I started crying. I went home and kept on crying. I had not cried for years. I had not cried even when my mother whom I loved more than anything in the World, died four years earlier, let alone about anything and anyone else. I thought I had no tears for nobody and nothing.

And then after 3 or so hours of crying I fell asleep on the sofa. And I saw myself small as an ant in a in a big, huge place like a hangar, a place that they put the airplanes into and I being so small the place seemed to me as being really enormous. There was a sound of running water like a huge waterfall and it had a voice-speaking saying: "When you called me in your house you did not expect me to clean it on my own and at once. But you and I will clean it, every nook and cranny. Stop crying, get up and go and pay all your debts."

I thought it was a joke or I was going bananas. Even so how on Earth could I pay all my debts? I owed - it seemed to everyone. To people I knew and even to many I did not, to young and small. To men and women. To shops and individuals. I also owed to numerous priests to whom I had gone asking for money to pay my electricity bill, or rent or food or anything. Of course I would spend all the money they would give me in gambling and so I would go back again and again until nobody would give me even a penny any more.

I needed to win the Lotto to pay all the debts I had created, and since I was not gambling any more, the lotto was out of the equation. How could I pay even a small part of my debts let alone all of it? Only God knew and Thanks to Him amazing though it may be, unbelievable even, but there you are. I paid everything I owed. To all whom I owed. All of it.

First I found a job going around distributing leaflets advertising various products. I was getting £16 pounds for a 1000 leaflets. In the town centre I would do this amount in 6-8 hours but outside that area it would take me 2 days. But anything was better than staying home doing nothing. I calculated with that rate I would pay my debts after 300 years and even then it was doubtful. But it is funny, how God arranges things. I did not calculate on His interference and help. Eight months later- on the Wednesday 30 of November 1994 as my five year-old daughter and I were passing by a garage she laid hands in the name of Jesus - on a car, a fiesta of 1981 and she said that this car belongs to her father, so we could go out when it was raining and not to get wet. And she told me that I am to give lifts in that car to anybody that needed it. As I had only £2 in my pocket I laughed and said "Sure I'll do that" and I left it at that.

I must say however that my daughter had some strange ideas about God. I remember once when she heard me asking God to give me a fiver, she asked me why was that? I replied that it was raining very hard outside and I had no money to take a taxi by which to take her to her nana without getting wet. I thought of praying to God for the taxi fare." Said I.

"No" said she, "I ask, why you pray only for a fiver and not for ten pounds, since you had nothing to eat either and you need money for food as well" And without further ado she knelt and asked Jesus to give me ten quid! Well we went out in the street and a few yards down the road, on a green area around the corner, there was a ten-pound note. Coincidence you may say. But how can you convince me that this was so? For there is this problem you see.

This is that the tenner - though it was raining cats and dogs- was dry. If it had been even a little wet OK. fine, I would accept that someone lost it and I found it. But this thing was totally dry and nobody else was around so how comes it was so dry? I still find it very strange indeed.

Anyway the next day, Thursday the first of December 1994, the Lord provided me with £500 through a Christian couple -Geraldine and her husband Mike, God bless them.

Two hours later I had bought that Fiesta car for £395, a £100 less than the man had asked the day before.

But the funny thing was that when I returned back home I found a letter from F.A.S, an employment agency- asking me to go for an interview the soonest possible. When I went next day they offered me a subcontract to teach the Greek language to some Irish gents who were going to Greece for the restoration of some monasteries and needed to know some basic Greek words. The funny thing was that these monasteries were in the very county that my father was born. For these lessons they offered me 30 times more money than I was making at that time. The only catch as they put it, was that I needed to have a car to go to the school in which the lessons would take place, as that place was 20 miles away and of course they were going to pay me 35 pence per mile. "But do you have a car?" they asked. "Of course I have a car," said I and I thought how great a sense of humour God has.

Then again after 2 years I was studying not only in a bible school but also doing computer courses and 2 years after that I opened a photo restoration business in Galway- Ireland. Today I have my own house, my own car and funniest of all I have paid all my debts; I owe nothing to anybody else but everything to my God.

Healing

I remember that on --Monday, October 13th of 1997 at 8 o'clock in the morning I was notified that my daughter Olga was taken to the hospital with meningitis. Strange thing I did not feel any worry at all. I started driving to the hospital giving out to God not because she was ill but because He would not allow me to worry. It was like I was behind a crystal partition separated from the rest of the World and all going by without myself being involved. "Let me worry Lord," said I; "you know that I adore this child and I feel weird not worrying about someone that I love so much. It is like betraying my feelings and myself'. But nothing was happening in the worry department, except having a great sense of peace and a feeling that all was well.

When I arrived in the hospital I found her sleeping. She had a pale face full of pain and with two intravenous syringes in her wrists. I asked the nurse that was sitting with her to leave me alone with the child for 5 minutes for I wanted to pray for my child on my own. She answered that she could not as the child's blood pressure was very low, her temperature extremely high and she was not allowed to leave the room and she had to stay every minute with Olga. It seems that I looked to her quite a strange fellow or whatever so she did agreed to give me a minute -no more as she said - alone with my daughter and so she went outside.

When she came back after a minute she found Olga standing up on the bed and when the nurse took Olga's blood pressure and then her temperature she found these to be perfect.

She went out and she came back with a doctor who took again Olga's blood pressure and temperature and he again found these perfect. And then he left and came back immediately with the Consultant Paediatrician who himself found the same readings. The consultant told me that maybe it was not meningitis after all, what the child had but we would know for sure when the blood results would come back from the haematology department.

He said that he couldn't find anything wrong with the child and that he would wait for the results to come back and he would see then what to do so we left it at that. He said he could not understand such a change. But I could. I was there and I saw that when I prayed asking Jesus to get involved and to heal my child, Olga opened her eyes and seemed to be well.

When the results came back they said that Olga had meningococcal septicaemia, the blood poisoning and most threatening form of the disease. Still the child was perfect in her health full of life, happy as always and no sign of any illness. She was perfect from that time on and she left the hospital the same week.

Some people later on claimed that it was the medicines in the hospital that had cured the child.

No medicine exists that I know of, that takes effect and heals an extremely ill patient in a minute. But who cares? Not I. Let people make all the excuses that people like to make. I was there however, I saw how the child was before the prayer, and how she recovered straight away. I gave and I am giving and I will never stop giving thanks to Christ Jesus the Healer for the miracle of my daughter getting well and that is that. And I always said and I will continue insisting that is true, that any other time I had laid hands and prayed for healing for myself or/and somebody else, nothing happened. Indeed the most of the time they got worse. So I do know who healed Olga and to Him, Christ Jesus the Healer I give all the thanks.

Then I also remember the time in 2001 that I was suffering from a very painful shoulder. I could not move let alone to work, it was that bad. The doctors said that it was because I had 3 deteriorated discs in my back and nothing could be done. So they gave me muscular injections and a chemist friend gave me an opiate, which a pill of it would drop down a horse as he put it. And I took 2 pills – a double dose of it and still nothing happened. And I asked genuine men and women of God to lay hands on me and to pray for me and they did; and still nothing happened.

And then when I locked the door of my shop for nobody to come in and started praising God for His Mercy and love, the pain increased if that could be possible - 2 fold. And when I kept praising and thanking God the pain became so severe that I started thinking that I was going to die from the pain. It was like someone was twisting a knife into a wound more and more viciously. And then after twenty minutes of thanksgiving the pain had gone and never came back but just for a twinge now and then and this disappears as soon as I say the name of Jesus.

Some people asked me how I could go on praying since the more I prayed the worse the pain was getting. I answer that the reason was that in the beginning I could not understand why the medicine would not offer me even the smallest relief and when I started praising God, why the pain increased. This was making no sense to me.

Morphine is used for post surgery with good effect and did nothing for me. And I remembered when

I was an unbeliever, away and against God; I could and would stay watching on TV - until 5 in the morning every film with vampires and such trash and never I felt in the least tired or sleepy.

But then after I became Christian when I open my Bible to study -even if it is 5 O'clock in the afternoon -

I start yawning like I had not had slept for a month.

So in this case when I opened my mouth to praise the Lord and the pain increased I realized that it was a spiritual attack rather a physical one. And in my ears was ringing the words of psalm 8: "out of the mouth of infants and babies you have ordained strength to still the enemy and the avenger." So I started praising the Lord and the enemy fled.

So I don't mind when people say that I am mad. It is better by far to be mad and happy than reasonable and miserable. Then again when I ask the people that call me mad to give me a reason which they themselves think- that made the pain go, they give me either a half-baked psychological clap trap which makes no sense whatsoever or no answer at all. When I ask them to explain even one of the healings and various other blessings I have received they smile patronizingly and say nothing. I don't blame them. I was a sceptic like them once, so I am not against these people. I pray for them and I ask the Lord Jesus to bless them the way He has blessed and still blesses me. But the point is; until they give me -if they can - an answer for even one of the miracles that have taken place in my life, an answer which stands to reason and not nonsensical humbug, I will continue attributing all these miracles I mentioned and the multitude of all the other miracles that I have no space to mention here, to My Lord and God to whom be Glory and Dominion forever and ever through the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Answer

Finally, many people ask me what impresses me most about Jesus, what is the thing that makes me stand fast in faith in Him. Is it his power? His giving? His love? What is it?

Well all that but there is something else, even more important for me at least. This is an attitude that Jesus has exhibited always with me. For which attitude I will love Him and will stand by Him forever. Jesus has always respected me. He respected me even when I had and acted with the wrong ideas, even when I -myself knew deep inside me that I was wrong.

He never lambasted me for my wrong ideas, opinions and even attitude and He never tried to bulldoze me into believing and doing what He wanted me to. Above all else when I did not agree with Him immediately in something He was showing me in the Bible (or dream or whatever), because either I needed more time to think or I wanted to have more information about the subject or simply because I did not want to obey Him, He never insulted me by disregarding me as a lost cause and never deserted me but stuck with me full of patience, tolerance and love. In my life I had always met people that loved me and let me do what I wanted, as long as I was doing what they wanted me to. Some "free" will.

Jesus never tried to convert me to His ideas by force. And He gained my trust for that attitude and the respect that He showed me. He proved with His behaviour that He indeed has given me free will and He was willing to respect this free will no matter what I was choosing to do.

We can see an example of what I am talking about in the Gospel of Luke chapter 5 verse 3. We can read that Jesus asked Simon to put out his boat a little. In verse 4 we can see that He said to Simon to launch into the deep etc. I realize that for English speaking Westerners both ask and say means the same. It is like a mother

saying that “she asked her child to clean his/her room but the child did or did not clean it etc.” What she means is that she said to or ordered the child to clean the room. But for the Greeks the word ask is different from the word say. To ask is to be politely inquiring for information or asking if you have the other person’s permission to do something or asking if the other person could do something you wished him/her to do. To say to the other person, is to tell that person even command the other person to do something you want him/her to do.

If you ask Jesus why did He not say, in other words -- (order) Simon to put out a little, be sure that He will answer, “the boat was Simon’s to do what Simon wanted to do with it. The same attitude we see in book of Revelation chapter 3 verse 20: “Behold I stand at the door and knock If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.” If you ask Jesus why - since He is the Lord of Lords- He stands and knocks instead of saying (ordering) the person inside the door to open it, or even - let’s say “kick down” the door, Jesus will give you the same excuse, that is: “The door belongs to someone else and it is up to the owner to open it or to keep it closed.” If He did not have this character’s trend I would not have gone close to Him and why should I? Who wants to be with such a bully? I would have stayed away and I would not have cared of the so-called consequences.

I would not have cared about His power and what He could or would do against me. But He is not a bully. And this politeness, this consideration, this respect that Jesus has for the other person even when the person is wrong, this is what attracted me to Jesus and it is what keeps me close to Him. And in this closeness His kindness has the opportunity to work in me His Will and His ideas.

Another “thing” with Jesus is that if you are patient, you will get from Him what you ask if it is according to His Love for people – no matter what the obstacles. No need to lose your courage if He does

not come when and from where you expect Him to come. He seems to have a million "secret doors." He comes from where and when we don't expect Him. If we are sinking in the rough seas of life, He comes and saves us by "walking on the waters."

Some times He comes as a "stranger" to offer us the help we need and we realize that it was He- Himself only when the trouble is past gone.

Some other times, when we are hiding ourselves behind locked doors away from our enemies scared and down cast, He comes through the "locked doors" to encourage us and to assure us that He is with us and nothing and nobody can harm us.

"Peace be with you" is always His greeting and even the inner soul of ours seem to obey this greeting as a command and all is well. The Lord is with us who can be successfully against us?

To God the Father that gave His only
Begotten Son to die for our sins and raised Him
from the dead so that through faith
in him we might have eternal life.
and to the Holy Spirit who strengthens us and
works in us the will of God,
Be glory and dominion and thanks through
The Name and person of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen and Amen.

Epilogue

Friends I can testify from personal experience that the life in Christ is the greatest and the most beneficial in every way for a human to live, and it can't be compared in any way with the life away from Him. I have no profit whatsoever in lying to you and God Himself is my witness that I am writing the truth.

So let me implore you that if you don't know Jesus as your Lord and Saviour and you want to start a close relationship with Him - closer and happier than any other relationship that you ever had or you will ever have, do pray this prayer.

Prayer

*Lord Jesus, I realize that I am a sinner
and separated from God.*

*The Bible says: "Whosoever calls upon
the Name of Jesus shall be saved."*

I now turn from my sin and my own way.

I call upon you Lord Jesus.

*Come into my heart and be my Saviour
and Lord and fill me with your Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Brother/sister, if you prayed the above prayer and you believed in your heart that Jesus died for our sins and God raised Him from the dead then you have become a child of the everlasting God. Start talking to Him about your problems and everything else that concerns you as you would to a loving, compassionate, caring Father, for that is what He really is.

Read the Bible every day. It is His Word and His direction- His advice to you. Do what He shows you to do and you will always be the victor in every situation.

Find a church filled with the Holy Spirit of God. Come in contact with other Christians who believe NOT in the traditions of man BUT only in the Word of God, which is the Bible, and fellowship with them.

Tell people what Jesus has done for you.

And I guarantee to you that your life will be a totally different life than the life you have lived up to now.

A great life. For you will be guided by the Creator of all visible and invisible things and the One who knows better than anybody else what is the right thing and what will make you happy.

Listen to Him.

To Him, the only immortal God, our heavenly Father, to the King of kings and Lord of lords, belong all Glory and thanks through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour,

For ever and ever, Amen and Amen.

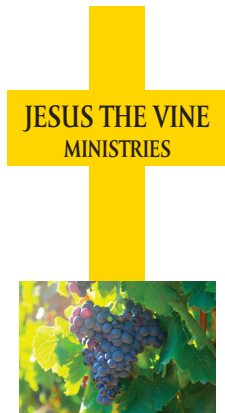
The prodigal son

There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his Father, "Father, give me my share of the inheritance". So he divided his property between them. Not long after that, the younger one got together all he had, and set off for a distant country and there he squandered all his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in the whole country and he began to be in want, so he hired himself out to a citizen of that country who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. When he came to his senses, he said "How many of my fathers hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will go back to my father and say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you, I am no longer worthy to be called your son, make me like one of your hired servants". So he got up and went to his Father. But while he was still a long way off, his Father saw him and was filled with compassion for him, he ran to his son, threw his arms around him, and kissed him. The son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you, I am no longer worthy to be called your son", But the Father said to his servants, "Quick, bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet, bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let us rejoice and celebrate for this my son was dead and is alive again. he was lost and is found" Luke 15 v 11-24

Basilis would testify that he lived the life of a modern day prodigal son, who in his time of desperation, by the grace of God, came to his senses, and returned to the arms of his loving heavenly father, who had been waiting for him, and who lovingly restored to him all that had been lost. Before he went to be with the Lord in 2012, He said "I have walked with the Lord 17 years now, I wouldn't change one hour of it, for all my life before I came to accept Jesus as my saviour and Lord"

God gave him the grace and strength to face terminal illness with such courage and strength, he continued to share his testimony of Gods goodness while he had breath, and encouraged many others who like him were walking in the valley of the shadow of death. One morning, very early, he had an unexpected visitor to his hospital bed. It was at a time when his doctors had said his time on this earth was very limited. I believe the Lord came to encourage him for what lay ahead. Basilis told me that he was radiating light with rainbows round about him, and he wore a white tunic with a beautiful wrap made of a material more beautiful than anything in this world, fastened with a golden fastening and he wore sandals. He sat on the end of his bed, and looked at him. There was no need for words as Basilis said that when he looked into the eyes of Jesus, he saw such love there as he had never experienced before. Love was radiating from the presence of the Lord. When Basilis described this encounter, he shed tears, but they were tears of joy, despite the situation he found himself in, with the illness he faced. He was fully alert and only taking panadol for pain, when he had this heavenly encounter. Two weeks later, Basilis went home to be with the Lord forever.

**“Oh death, where is your sting?, Oh grave where is your victory?”
(1 Corinthians 15v 55)**



tiarna.iosa@gmail.com