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THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

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The world we live in is a very beautiful and marvellous creation. But there is one feature of our world which we do not like at all and that is the fact of death, and there is a second feature closely related to this which is even worse, and that is the way men and women sometimes treat each other, our unkindness, the lies we tell other people, the cruelty and torture which we know some people inflict on others, the injustice, the harshness and so on. This is a very unpleasant, indeed it is a horrifying aspect of the world and it creates in us a fear of other people as to what they will do, when they get power over us. Now it is just at these two points of sin and death that Christians have news to tell. God has dealt with death and with its cause (which is men's wickedness) by taking our nature and living our life and overcoming human evil and beating death. Jesus, the Son of God, for our sakes came down from heaven, became a man, lived an ordinary life, but at no point did He fall into sin or unkindness, or lying, or cruelty, or injustice. On the other hand He allowed His fellow men to treat Him in this way, to betray Him for money, to torture Him, to ridicule Him in a very cruel way. Though He was their Creator, He allowed men to treat Him as we treat one another. At no point did He respond with anger or bitterness against His fellow men who were acting like this. Neither did He curse God for allowing it to happen, but His faith in God's wisdom never flinched.

Through behaving in this way He snapped the connection between sin and death. He fell into no sin either against man or God so that through the power of God He sloughed off physical death and rose again. In Jesus, God has overcome the two things that mar His creation, human badness and its consequence, death. Our hope for the present and for the future rests on Jesus. We may share His victory over sin and death because He will include us in it if we come to Him. Jesus is King, He has conquered death and the Devil, whose power was behind them both. Jesus is King. He has won the victory over every sort of evil and it was for this purpose that He came into the world. As Jesus said, "For this hour I came into the world". Bethlehem and Christmas was the beginning of which Good Friday, the cross and the resurrection, was the culmination, and we may now experience the benefits of that great victory, for Jesus lives to be our Saviour, our King and our Friend, if we open up our life to Him.

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