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CHRIST IS SUFFICIENT

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"THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"

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Have you ever noticed that the opposition in a sporting contest always seems much bigger than you are? This rule seems especially true in football; I can never remember playing in a team which towered over the enemy. We always seemed to be undersized.

Perhaps this feeling of mine goes back to my first experiences of playing Rugby League at primary school. Most of us were rejects from the soccer squad. For example, I know they didn't want me to play soccer because I couldn't see properly without my glasses. It was that sort of team. We were always thrashed 50 or 60 to nil. The absolute high-point of the season came one day when we scored a try. Mind you, even then we didn't convert it.

Now my whole reason for reminiscing is to have a reason to say this: our sins also tower over us. They really are too big for us to handle. When we examine our lives by the rules that God makes for human existence, we discover wrong thoughts, wrong words and wrong deeds. In fact, there is a profound bias toward evil that grips even the best of us.

Nor is God going to let our sins pass without comment. Although we forget things, his memory of every stage of our lives is complete and still fresh. Whatever self-congratulatory thoughts we may have of ourselves - and we do have an absurdly high opinion of our own merit - God sees us for what we really are. Those sins of ours really are big and tough opponents, as you know if you have a guilty conscience about even one or two of them.

Quite clearly something is going to have to be done if we are going to overcome our sins and be friends with God. But what? People have various answers to that question, but they generally boil down to just two options.

First, we can try to remove them ourselves, by building up a supply of credit, so to speak. We can repent and try to fill our lives with goodness, on the assumption that it will somehow be enough to make God forget the past. Unfortunately this will not work. Being good is only what we are supposed to be anyhow; it can't be used to gain extra credit. Besides, have you ever seriously tried to be good enough?

There is a second way to remove sin. It is to let God remove it for us. If he just forgot our sins he would be an unjust, evil God. He has not forgotten sin, he has sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to bear the weight of sin, to stand in our shoes, to die for us. And what Jesus has done is, of course, sufficient to take our sins away. God is not content with half-measures where this sort of thing is concerned.

It sounds simple, doesn't it? I mean having your guilt removed by God. But you'd be surprised how hard people find it to ask for forgiveness. Many of us would rather wallow in our guilt than be humble enough to turn to God, and to give our lives to him in gratitude. The doorway into the kingdom of God is a very narrow one, and the person who carries loads of high self-esteem will never be able to squeeze in.

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