THE IMPORTANCE OF BUT

Waterskiing doesn’t look very complicated, especially for someone who considers himself to be athletic. How hard can it be? the young man thought to himself as the group of girls asked him if he knew how to water-ski and whether he would like to go.

“Sounds great,” he said, pretending to know all about the experience. He had never been on skis, but he avoided sharing that information and replaced it with “I can do it.” He had only himself to blame for what happened. After minutes of wriggling in the water he finally got the skis on, bent his knees, arms straight, and nodded his head. Sure enough, straight up on the skis he went, and he was skiing—first time. It was easy.

After about six seconds of glory and admiration from the girls in the boat, both skis flipped off, and he fell but failed to let go of the rope. After being dragged behind the boat for five minutes (while everyone yelled, “Let go of the rope!”), he finally let go. As he waited in the water, sputtering and gagging, for the boat to turn and come pick him up, he thought he might actually drown. There were no words for his humiliation.

He thought that he knew enough—that the fact that he was athletic would be sufficient. So did Peter. He was an expert fisherman (Luke 5). He knew there were no fish available for business in the afternoon. All wisdom and experience shouted, “Don’t do it. People are going to think you are crazy.”

The biggest three-letter word in the world is but. It is a watershed word. It is the continental divide separating ideas. But shows an unexpected change of direction. Peter’s words to Jesus are the watershed moment of submission.

“Master, we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets” (verse 5, NIV).

“But because you say so” will always be a watershed phrase in the spiritual journey.

FOR STUDY

Memory Text: “Come now, and let us reason together,” says the LORD, “though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool” (Isaiah 1:18, NKJV).

Our Beliefs, no. 9, The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Christ: “In Christ’s life of perfect obedience to God’s will, His suffering, death, and resurrection, God provided the only means of atonement for human sin, so that those who by faith accept this atonement may have eternal life, and the whole creation may better understand the infinite and holy love of the Creator.”

Ellen G. White, Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, pp. 13-15

RESPONDING

Read 1 Corinthians 16:13, 14.

Gina watched her younger brother Craig make mistake after mistake. One weekend it was driving after being grounded. Another time it was staying out past curfew. So many promises and telling her that he was trying to get his act together, all fell flat as soon as they left his lips. She paid for him to go to college, but he dropped out, wasting a whole semester’s tuition that she had paid for. The list went on.

But he seems so sincere. He seems to want to get his life in order. He is a good example of the spirit being willing but the flesh being weak. How do you help restore someone like Gina’s brother Craig? How can Gina be helpful? What encouragement or advice would you give her while she is so frustrated with her little brother?

BIBLE ANSWERS ON THE LIFE, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

Read Isaiah 53; John 3:16; 1 John 2:2; 1 John 4:10.

Make no mistake. God loved us so much that He sent His Son, Jesus, to take our place in payment for our sins. And because He willingly did this, we are forgiven and have the opportunity to be used by Him to lead others to God. What joy! What a privilege!

What areas of your life do you need to turn over to Christ?

_________________________________________________________________

Unscramble the words in the word bank and then use them to fill in the blanks.

srodassabma gridaelp sessuotoehtigg spllicncocer
detinnmoc nollillicoer sessasapert

delicnoce ergupmi

“That is, that God was in Christ _______________ the world to Himself, not _______________ their _______________ to them, and has _______________ to us the word of _______________. Now then, we are _______________ for Christ, as though God were _______________ through us: we _______________ you on Christ’s behalf, be _______________ to God. For he made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the _______________ of God in Him”

(2 Corinthians 5:19-21, NKJV).
Peter marks the problem. If you don’t keep reminding yourself that your sins are swallowed up in Christ’s death on Calvary, then there is no clear way to see hope. Maybe today it’s time to remind yourself what Jesus has been trying to say for centuries: “I . . . will remember their sins no more” (2 Peter 1:9, NIV). Peter marks the problem. If you don’t keep reminding yourself that your sins are swallowed up in Christ’s death on Calvary, then there is no clear way to see hope. Maybe today it’s time to remind yourself what Jesus has been trying to say for centuries: “I . . . will remember their sins no more” (2 Peter 1:9, NIV). When Peter boldly claimed that Jesus was the Messiah when no one else would, Jesus promised to build His church on the testimony of people like Peter who bravely confessed Jesus as Lord. But the roller coaster of the bravest men on earth. What will God’s grace do for you?

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Peter mastered the art of finding mercy in Christ, and that bolstered one of the bravest men on earth. What will God’s grace do for you?

If the apostle Peter was consistent about anything, it was being able to repeatedly break the promise that very night. The experience brought so much anguish that many would never have returned to face Jesus again. But Peter, full of shame and regret, remained close to Jesus. And Jesus remained close to him. Peter grew over time, and so can we. If Peter’s life teaches us anything, it challenges us to be brave and willing to take risks. He also teaches us to cling to Christ in our failures. Can you imagine the kind of stories Peter is going to tell in heaven?

When he thought he would impress Jesus with his understanding of forgiveness, he proposed that maybe we should forgive people up to seven times. But, Jesus said, “No, seventy times seven!” Jesus invited him to do the math. What about when Peter reacted to Jesus’ words about having to go to Jerusalem and die? He forbade Jesus to talk like that. Do you remember what Jesus said? “Get behind me, Satan.” Those words must have done more than puncture his pride—he must have been devastated.

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