

Malcolm's Monday Musings : 22 June 2020

(i) Scripture.

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always), even to the end of the age'. Amen.

Matthew 28. 18-20 (New King James Version)

(ii) Food for thought.

'Things that are above'.

'Seek the things that are above...set your mind on the things that are above' (Col. 3. 1-2: Revised Version).

'You must not only seek heaven; you must also think heaven'.

(J. B. Lightfoot, *Colossians and Philemon*).

'A man that could look no way but downwards'.

The Interpreter takes them apart again, and has them first into a room where was a man that could look no way but downwards, with a muck-rake in his hand. There stood also one over his head with a celestial crown in his hand, and proffered him that crown for his muck-rake; but the man did neither look up nor regard, but raked to himself the straws, the small sticks, and dust of the floor.

Then said Christiana, "I persuade myself that I know somewhat the meaning of this; for this is a figure of a man of this world: is it not, good sir?"

"Thou hast said right", said Interpreter, "and his muck-rake doth show his carnal mind ... whereas it was also showed thee that *the man could look no way but downwards*, it is to let thee know that earthly things, when they are with power upon men's minds, quite carry their hearts away from God".

Then said Christiana, "O deliver me from this muck-rake".

(John Bunyan, *Pilgrims Progress: Part II, The Second Stage*).

A short inventory of the Christian's possessions.

According to scripture, 'we have':

- (i) Peace with God, Rom. 5. 1;
- (ii) Reconciliation, Rom. 5. 11;
- (iii) Treasure, 2 Cor. 4. 7;
- (iv) Redemption, Eph. 1. 7; Col. 1. 14;
- (v) An inheritance, Eph. 1. 11;
- (vi) Boldness and access, Eph. 3. 12; Rom. 5. 2;
- (vii) A great high priest, Heb. 4. 14;
- (viii) Hope, as an anchor of the soul, Heb. 6. 19;
- (ix) An altar, Heb. 13. 10;
- (x) An advocate, 1 John 2. 1.

'Good' from first to last.

The first chapter of Genesis speaks of God's creatorial work as 'good' (Gen. 1. 4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31).

The last chapter of Genesis speaks of God's providential intention as 'good' (Gen. 50. 20; cf. Rom. 8. 28).

The faithfulness of God.

That 'God is faithful' was the explanation and basis for Paul's confidence that the carnal and immature Corinthians (1 Cor. 3. 1) would be confirmed and found free from charge when the Lord Jesus returned (1 Cor. 1. 8-9).

'All things but loss'.

'I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord' (Phil. 3. 8).

'You may not have much in this world, but if you have Christ, then you have something greater than all of heaven and earth put together ... Christ is better than all we have ever had or known besides Him ... Can you say with the Psalm, "Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you (Psa. 73. 25)"?'

(Marshall Segal, *All we have is Christ*.)

'No sacrifice'.

'People talk of the sacrifice I have made in spending so much of my life in Africa. Can that be called a sacrifice which is simply paid back as a small part of a great debt owing to our God, which we can never repay? ... It is *emphatically no sacrifice*'.

(David Livingstone, 'Speech to students at Cambridge University on 4 December 1857'.)

Fear and suffering.

'Fear not *what* you can suffer, only be careful *for what* you suffer'.

(William Gurnall, 'The Christian in Complete Armour', page 825.)

Troubles.

(i) 'Why should our shoulders bear what He stands ready to remove? ... Let trouble do its worst, its worst cannot last long'.

(Henry Law, 'Cordials in temporal troubles'.)

(ii) His love in time past
Forbids me to think
He'll leave me at last
In trouble to sink.

(John Newton, the hymn, 'Begone unbelief'.)

Evil restrained.

'No turbulence of evil has progressed one hair's breadth beyond the limit set by God's permissive will'.

(H. C. Hewlett, 'The Glories of our Lord', page 119.)

Enough time.

'I need to break the very bad habit of saying I don't have enough time. When I say this, I'm not only blaming my own moral laziness on my circumstances, I'm actually blaming God ... *God always gives us enough time to do what He calls us to do*'.

(Jon Bloom at <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/you-have-just-enough-time>.)

(See the attached 'Make the days count' picture.)

The Emmaus Road.

The road along which the walk of two disciples took them from '*heartbreak*' ('looking sad', Luke 24. 17) to '*heartburn*' ('Was not our heart burning within us', Luke 24. 32)!

What Jesus is 'called' in Matthew 1.

The *Anointed* One: 'Jesus, who is *called Christ*' (Matt. 1. 16).

The *Atoning* One: 'You shall *call* His name *Jesus*, for He will save His people from their sins' (Matt. 1. 21).

The *Abiding* One: 'They shall *call* His name *Emmanuel*, which being interpreted is, God with us' (Matt. 1. 23).

'Revealed' in the Gospel of Matthew.

The Father reveals *the Son* to men (Matt. 16. 17), and *the Son* reveals *the Father* to men (Matt. 11. 27; cf. John 14. 6, 9).

The Lord Jesus: contrasts in the Gospel of Matthew.

(i) He is *hungry* (Matt. 4. 2; 21. 18), but He *feeds* multitudes (Matt. 14. 19-20; 15. 36-37).

(ii) He is *weary* (Matt. 8. 24), but He offers *rest* (Matt. 11. 28).

(iii) He is *greater* than the Temple (Matt. 12. 6), but He *pays the Temple Tax* (Matt. 17. 24-27).

(iv) He is accused of being *in league with the 'ruler of demons'* (Matt. 9. 34; 12. 24), but He *casts out demons* by God's Spirit (Matt. 9. 33; 12. 28).

(v) He is *sold* for thirty pieces of silver (Matt. 26. 15), but He gives His life *a ransom* for many (Matt. 20. 28).

Detailed notes. [See the attached Word document, 'The Great Commission'](#).

(iii) Go on, smile.

Preachers:

A short-sighted preacher struggled to read the note which an usher had passed up to the pulpit. The note read: 'Bill Jones having gone to sea, his wife desires the prayers of the congregation for his safety'.

Failing to observe the exact spelling and the punctuation, the preacher rather startled his congregation by announcing, 'Bill Jones, *having gone to see his wife, desires the prayers of the congregation for his safety!*'

The Lutheran preacher always started his service with the statement, 'The Lord be with you'. The congregation would then respond, 'And also with you'.

One week, the church's PA system wasn't working. As a consequence, the very first thing the preacher said when ascending his pulpit was, 'There seems to be something wrong with this sound system'. To which the congregation dutifully responded, '*... and also with you*'.
(See the attached 'And with you' picture.)

Three boys are in the school yard bragging about their fathers.
The first boy says, 'My Dad is a poet. All he has to do is to scribble some words on a piece of paper. He calls it a poem, reads it out, and he gets £50'.
'Aw, that's nothing', boasted the second boy, 'my Dad is a songwriter. All he has to do is to scribble some words on a piece of paper. He calls it a song, reads it out, and he gets £100'.
'Well, I got you both beat', chimed in the third boy, 'my Dad is a preacher. All he has to do is to scribble some words on a piece of paper. He calls it a sermon, reads it out, and *it takes three men to collect all the money!*'

And, separately:

A young girl was seen wearing an Allergy Alert bracelet. A passing stranger asked her what the bracelet was for.
'It's because I'm allergic, 'she replied, 'to nuts and eggs'.
'I see, my dear', the stranger said quietly, and then asked, 'Are you allergic to cats as well?'
'I don't know', the young girl replied, '*... I don't eat cats*'.

Don't count
the days,
make
the days
count.

