

Malcolm's Monday Musings: 13 July 2020

(i) Scripture.

We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair (1); persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed (2).

2 Corinthians 4. 7-9 (*King James Version*)

[Notes:

(1) Verse 8 is rendered by N. T. Wright: 'We are under all kinds of pressure, but we are not crushed completely; *we are at a loss, but not at our wits' end*'. (The Kingdom New Testament.)

(2) Verse 9 is paraphrased by J. B. Phillips: 'We are persecuted, but we never have to stand it alone: *we may be knocked down but we are never knocked out!*' (New Testament in Modern English.)]

(ii) Food for thought.

Repentance.

'Genuine repentance is ... an attitude that says, "If I had to do this over again, I wouldn't do it. I wish I could go back and change it, but I can't".'

(Steve Farrar, *Finishing Strong*, page 156.)

(See the attached 'Repentance' picture.)

Offered and given.

The Lord Jesus both was 'offered' (Heb. 9. 28) and 'offered Himself' (Heb. 9. 14).

He both was 'given' (John 3. 16) and 'gave Himself' (1 Tim. 2. 6).

'The Lion of the Tribe of Judah' (Rev. 5. 5; cf. Gen. 49. 10).

Agur spoke of the lion as the creature which is 'strongest among beasts, and turns not away for any' (Prov. 30. 30).

Certainly, 'the Lion of the tribe of Judah' never 'turned away for any' from the path which God had mapped out for Him!

He Himself declared prophetically, 'The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious; *I turned not backward ... I have set my face as a flint*' (Isa. 50. 5, 7).

We read in the Old Testament that 'Hazeal king of Syria ... set his face to go to Jerusalem (as an invader and oppressor, that is)' (2 Kings 12. 17). But the then-king of Judah (Jehoash) bought Hazeal off temporarily with gold from the temple, so that Hazeal didn't then reach Jerusalem (2 Kings 12. 18). But *nobody* {not even the devil, with his offer of 'all the kingdoms of the world and their glory' (Matt. 4. 8-9)} *could ever buy off the Lord Jesus!* Nothing and nobody {not even Peter with his misguided remonstrance (Matt. 16. 22)} could deter or deflect the One who, 'when the days drew near for Him to be taken up, set His face to go to Jerusalem' (Luke 9. 51)! And so, on schedule and as planned, 'He entered Jerusalem' (Mark 11. 11), where He, 'the Lion of the tribe of Judah' prevailed ('overcame') (Rev. 5. 5).

[Reference to 'the Lion of the tribe of Judah' in Revelation 5 is made on page 5 of the attached Word document.]

Four notable 'places'.

(i) 'A *place* called Gethsemane' (Matt. 26. 36).

(ii) 'A *place*' called ... Gabbatha' (John 19. 13).

(iii) 'A *place* called Golgotha' (Matt. 27. 33).

(iv) 'The *place* where the Lord lay' (Matt. 28. 6).

Christ 'the first'.

'To king Agrippa, Paul declared Christ to be the *first that should rise* from the dead (Acts 26. 23). Here was priority in time Writing to the Colossians, the apostle proclaimed Christ as the *firstborn from the dead* (Col. 1. 18). Here was priority also in rank'.

(H. C. Hewlett, *The Glories of our Lord*, page 95.)

Some 'lettuce' ('Let us') for us to cultivate.

(i) 'Let us sing to the Lord! Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation' (Psa. 95. 1).

(ii) 'Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God' (2 Cor. 7. 1).

- (iii) 'Let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart' (Gal. 6. 9).
- (iv) 'Let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith' (Gal. 6. 10).
- (v) 'Let us ... be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation' (1 Thess. 5. 8).
- (vi) 'Let us ... come boldly unto the throne of grace' (Heb. 4. 16).
- (vii) 'Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us' (Heb. 12. 1).
- (viii) 'Let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name' (Heb. 13. 15).
- (ix) 'Let us love one another: for love is of God' (1 John 4. 7).

'Walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called' (Eph. 4. 1).

'On 28 May 1972 the Duke of Windsor died in Paris. The same evening a television programme rehearsed the main events of his life. Extracts from earlier films were shown, in which he answered questions about his upbringing, brief reign and abdication. Recalling his boyhood as Prince of Wales, he said: "My father [King George V] was a strict disciplinarian. Sometimes when I had done something wrong, he would admonish me saying, 'My dear boy, you must always remember who you are'". It is my conviction that our heavenly Father says the same to us every day: "My dear child, *you must always remember who you are*".' (John Stott, 'The Message of Romans', pages 187-188.)

Affection on things above.

'We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about ... when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. ... At present we are on the outside ... the wrong side of the door. ... But *all the leaves of the New Testament are rustling with the rumour that it will not always be so*.' (C. S. Lewis, 'The Weight of Glory', a sermon preached in Oxford on 8 June 1942.)

Rejoice in the Lord.

It is one thing to rest peaceful and content under a blossoming fig tree (Micah 4. 4; Zech. 3. 10; John 1. 48); it is something altogether different to 'rejoice in the Lord' when the fig tree *doesn't* blossom (Hab. 3. 17-18)!

Afflictions.

'Afflictions are sharp arrows, but they are shot from the hand of a loving Father'. (Attributed to Gregory Nazianzen by Thomas Watson, 'The Lord's Prayer', Preface.)

The danger of prosperity.

'If adversity has slain her thousands, prosperity has slain her ten thousands'. (Jeremiah Burroughs, 'Contentment, Prosperity and God's Glory', page 68.)

'By the grace of God I am what I am' (1 Cor. 15. 10).

In this one verse, Paul drew attention to God's 'grace' no less than three times. In the context of 1 Corinthians 15 overall, I imagine him saying:

- (i) 'Thankfully, *I am not what I have been*' (1 Cor. 15. 9);
- (ii) 'Regrettably, *I am not what I am going to be*' (1 Cor. 15. 51-53); but ...
- (iii) 'Truthfully, by the grace of God, *I am what I am*' (1 Cor. 15. 10).

Paul's fourfold 'I am ready'.

- (i) *To be bound and to die*: 'Paul answered, "I am ready not only to be bound but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus"' (Acts 21. 13).
- (ii) *To preach the gospel*: 'As much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel' (Rom. 1. 15).
- (iii) *To benefit others*: 'I am ready to come to you ... and I will most gladly spend and be spent for you' (2 Cor. 12. 14-15).
- (iv) *To die a martyr's death for Christ*: 'I am ready to be poured out as a drink offering' (2 Tim. 4. 6).

Detailed notes. [See the attached Word document, 'The Lord's wonderful hands'](#).

(iii) Go on, smile.

Two women were chatting when the subject of marriage counselling came up. 'Oh, my husband and I will never need that', the one asserted, 'my husband and I have such a wonderful relationship'. 'It's really all down to our education', she explained. 'He has a Bachelor's Degree in Communications and I have a Master's Degree in Theatre and Drama. *He communicates well, and I act like I'm listening!*'

And then two 'hairy' smiles:

Two women were chatting when the one said to the other, 'I do like that nice locket you are wearing. Do you carry a memento of some sort in it?'
'Yes indeed', the other replied, 'it is a lock of my husband's hair'.
'Oh', said the first, 'but I thought that your husband was still alive'.
The other responded with a sigh, 'Well yes, he is – *it's his hair that's gone!*'

After the Scotsman had obtained the full treatment in the barber's shop (shave, shampoo, manicure, haircut, etc.), he lifted the little boy with him into the chair. 'I have to pop out', he told the barber, 'I'll be back in a wee while'.

But when the little chap's haircut was finished, there was no sign of the man.

'Oh dear, said the barber, 'it looks as if your daddy's clean forgotten all about you'.

'That wasn't my daddy', answered the little boy, 'that was the man who walked up to me in the park, grabbed my hand, and said, "Come on, laddie, *we're gonnae get ourselves a free haircut!*"'

Finally, see the attached 'Just a few more feet' picture.

REPENTANCE
IS MORE THAN A REPEATED
APOLOGY.

KEVIN DEYOUNG

