

Malcolm's Monday Musings : 16 February 2026.

(i) Scripture.

Love never ends.

As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away.

For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away.

When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways.

For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13. 8-13 (*English Standard Version*)

(ii) Food for thought.

'Now I know in part; then I shall know fully' (1 Cor. 13. 12).

'We are "squinting in a fog", peering through a distorted reflection. Full clarity will come—but not yet.

(J. McLain, 'We don't Know It All', accessed at <https://www.patheos.com/blogs/leadaquietlife/2026/02/hard-conversations-we-dont-know-it-all/>.)

'He is not afraid of bad news; his heart is firm, trusting in the Lord' (Psa. 112. 7).

'This is a fallen world that's full of sin and suffering. Turn on the news, scroll through your phone, or just listen to the conversations around you, and it can feel like a never-ending stream of bad news. Sometimes, the emotional weight of it all can feel crushing. You might find yourself feeling stressed and anxious because of all the hardship you see and hear about. It's natural to feel this way. You're human, and you're paying attention to a world that's painfully broken.

So, how can you deal with all of this bad news? The key is in Psalm 112. 7: you won't be afraid of bad news when you trust in God with a steadfast heart ...

Instead of becoming paralyzed by fear when you learn about bad news, ask God what He wants you to do with the information you have. The bad news of this world shouldn't lead you to despair; it should lead you to compassion and action. How can you help shine light into the darkness of the world? God may lead you to pray, send an encouraging message to someone you know who's struggling, donate to a charity, or do an act of kindness for someone in need.

The greatest antidote to the temporary bad news of this world is the eternal good news of the Gospel message that this life, with all its troubles, is not the end of the story'.

(W. Hopley, 'Dealing with bad news', accessed at <https://www.crosswalk.com/devotionals/your-daily-prayer/a-prayer-to-deal-with-bad-news.html>.)

Two occasions when the Lord Jesus refused a person's request concerning a sibling.

(i) The woman who asked Jesus to instruct her 'sister' to share the workload with her (Luke 10. 40).

(ii) The man who asked Jesus to instruct his 'brother' to share the inheritance with him (Luke 12. 13).

On each occasion, characteristically the Lord took the opportunity to teach important and timeless lessons:

(i) 'You are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part' (Luke 10. 41-42).

(ii) 'Beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions' (Luke 12. 15).

'Praying always' (Eph. 6. 18).

'We should pray when we are in a praying mood, for it would be sinful to neglect so fair an opportunity.

'We should pray when we are not in a proper mood, for it would be dangerous to remain in so unhealthy a condition.

'Prayer is as suitable for any spot on earth as praise is suitable for any place in heaven'.

Asleep.

- (i) When the disciples faced a storm, they cried out while Jesus slept (Mark 4. 37-38).
- (ii) When Jesus faced the cross, He cried out while the disciples slept (Mark 14. 37-41).

'I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father' (John 10. 17-18).

'In one sense, of course, Jesus' enemies conspired against Him and killed Him (Acts 2. 23b; 3. 13; 4. 10; 5. 30b; 7. 52). But if that is all that can be said, it is unclear how His death could be construed as anything more heroic than a martyr's commitment—certainly not a God-ordained sacrifice whose significance is bound up with the willingness of the sacrifice to submit to God's will.

'The early Christians, understanding these issues well, simultaneously reproached the official executioners, and confidently prayed, "They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen" (Acts 4. 27–28).

'So here—not only Jesus' disciples before the cross, but any who are interested in becoming Christians after the event, must understand that looking at the crucifixion from God's perspective assures us that no part of it took place outside God's plan. How could the most significant event in redemptive history be construed in any other way?

(D. A. Carson, 'The Gospel According to John; The Pillar New Testament Commentary', pages. 388–389.)

That which (i) 'becomes' God and that which (ii) 'becomes' us.

(i) 'It became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings' (Heb. 2. 10).

(ii) 'Such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens' (Heb. 7. 26).

'In Hebrews 2, it became God that Christ should pass through sufferings; in Hebrews 7, it becomes us that He should be lifted up higher than the heavens'.

(J. N. Darby, 'Notes on the Epistle to the Hebrews', Collected Writings, Volume 28, page 19—slightly adapted.)

'Lifted up'.

'In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus offers a threefold prediction of His death and resurrection on His journey to Jerusalem (Mark 8. 31–32; 9. 30–31; 10. 33–34).

'These sayings aren't included in the Fourth Gospel. John does, however, include a threefold series where Jesus foretells His being "lifted up" (John 3. 14; 8. 28; 12. 32). These three sayings effectively serve as John's counterpart to Jesus's passion predictions in Mark's Gospel'.

(J. Roh, 'Lifted Up: Discover John's View of the Cross', accessed at <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/lifted-up-cross-john/> and slightly adapted.)

No contradiction!

'Both Matthew 28. 2 and Mark 16. 5 mention one angel at Jesus's tomb, whereas Luke 24. 4 and John 20. 12 mention two.

'The report of two angels does not contradict the reference to one; rather, it reflects a difference in the authors' selective emphases. Though Matthew and Mark are silent about the presence of a second angel, we can presuppose the angel's presence from Luke and John. More information in one text can help us read a comparable text with less information and fill in any gaps ...

'Matthew's and Mark's silence concerning the second angel is not a positive claim that no second angel was present; therefore, there is no contradiction with the accounts in Luke and John'.

(M. Ferguson, 'Should We Forgive Apart from Repentance?', footnote 10.)

Imagery common to the patriarch Jacob and the soothsayer Balaam.

(i) 'He (Judah) crouched, he lay down as a lion and as a lioness; who shall rouse him?' (Gen. 49. 9).

(ii) 'He (Israel) crouched, he lay down as a lion and as a lioness; who shall rouse him?' (Num. 24. 9).

'Out of His sight' (2 Kings 17. 18a, 20b, 23a).

'When God is spoken of as removing His people "out of His sight", the reference is to their being driven from the land.

'This is not because the writer thought of the Lord as somehow restricted to the land of Israel, but because He regarded the land as the primary arena in which the Lord's purposes for His people were fulfilled'.

(J. J. Bimson, '1 and 2 Kings', New Bible commentary, 4th edition, page 377—slightly adapted.)

'At all times' in the Book of Psalms.

(i) Blessing the Lord: 'I will bless the Lord at all times: His praise shall continually be in my mouth' (Psa. 34. 1).

(ii) Trusting in God: Trust in Him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before Him: God is a refuge for us' (Psa. 62. 8).

(iii) Practising righteousness: 'Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times' (Psa. 106. 3).

Psalms 4 and 5.

(i) 'Psalm 4 is a bedtime vesper. 'In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety' (Psa. 4. 8).

(ii) 'Psalm 5 is a sunrise prayer. 'My voice you shall hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning I will direct it to you' (Psa. 5. 3).

(J. B. Nicholson Jr, 'Good Morning, Lord!, Taste and See: Uplook Ministries', 6 February 2026.)

'The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims His handiwork' (Psa. 19. 1).

'The heavens, showing the Maker's wisdom, practically shout with a voice; though silent, they declare the Creator's craftsmanship.

'We can hear the heavens teach us: "O mortals, in looking on us and seeing our beauty and vastness, our incessant orbit with its orderly, harmonious movement ... through the beauty you see, envisage the beauty of the unseen Source"'.

(Gregory of Nyssa (335-395 AD), 'Answers to Enomius' Second Book'.)

'The fashion of this world passes away' (1 Cor. 7. 31).

'I was in the robe-chamber, adjoining the House of Lords, when the King put on his robes. His brow was much furrowed with age and quite clouded with care.

'And is this all the world can give even to a king? All the grandeur it can afford?

A blanket of ermine round his shoulders, so heavy and cumbersome he can scarcely move under it! A huge heap of borrowed hair, with a few plates of gold and glittering stones upon his head!

'Alas, what a bauble is human greatness! And even this will not endure'.

(John Wesley, 'Journal', Tuesday, 23 January 1736.)

'We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf' (Isa. 64. 6).

'Israel's sins had thoroughly polluted her ... She was (i) as unclean as a leper, (ii) as repulsive as menstrual cloths, and (iii) as spiritually lifeless as a dead leaf on a tree ready to be blown away'.

(Thomas Constable, 'Expository Notes', comment on Isa. 64. 6.)

'When you give alms, do not blow a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets' (Matt. 6. 2).

'There is no evidence for a literal blowing of trumpets in connection with almsgiving, and the phrase may be used purely metaphorically here.

'It is unnecessary to suggest some sort of pun or mistranslation based on the fact that the donation chests in the Jerusalem temple were known as trumpets because of their shape ... These trumpets were in the temple, not in the synagogues and streets. They were also in Jerusalem, not in Galilee ...

'The impression of ostentation is increased by speaking of almsgiving not only in the synagogues, where it was expected (but would probably go into a distribution system rather than straight to the beneficiaries), but also out in the streets (presumably directly to beggars, who could be expected to respond enthusiastically).

'The fact that the rabbis also warn against ostentation when giving alms indicates that it was a familiar problem'.

(R. T. France, 'The Gospel of Matthew: The New International Commentary of the New Testament', comments on Matt. 6. 2).

Four examples of unnamed and insignificant persons who accomplished important things.

- (i) A 'certain man' of Shechem (Gen. 37. 15-17).
- (ii) A 'certain woman' of Thebez (Judges 9. 53-54).
- (iii) Naaman's maid (2 Kings 5. 2-4).
- (iv) Paul's nephew (Acts 23. 16-24).

'My servant'.

- (i) 'My servant Abraham' (Gen. 26. 24).
 - (ii) 'My servant Moses' (Num. 12. 7-8; 2 Kings 21. 8).
 - (iii) 'My servant Caleb' (Num. 14. 24).
 - (iv) 'My servant David' (2 Sam. 3. 18; 7. 5, 8 etc.).
 - (v) 'My servant Job' (Job 1. 8; 2. 3; 42. 7-8).
 - (vi) 'My servant Isaiah' (Isa. 20. 3).
 - (vii) 'My servant Eliakim' (Isa. 22. 20).
 - (viii) 'My servant Jacob' (Ezek. 28. 25).
- ... and by far the greatest ...
- (ix) 'My servant the Branch' (Zech. 3. 8).

'The Branch'.

'As Branch, the Messiah is represented in the Old Testament in four different aspects of his character (King, Servant, Man, and God).

'These aspects are developed in the New Testament in the four Gospels:

- (1) in Matthew as the Branch of David, i.e., as the Davidic messianic King (Isa. 11. 1; Jer. 23. 5; 33. 15);
- (2) in Mark as the Lord's Servant, the Branch (Isa. 42. 1; 49. 6; 50. 10; 52. 13; Ezek. 34. 23-24; Zech. 3. 8);
- (3) in Luke as the Man whose name is the Branch (Zech. 6. 12); and
- (4) in John as the Branch of the Lord (Isa. 4. 2)'.
(K. L. Barker, 'Zechariah: The Expositor's Bible Commentary', 1985, Volume 7, page 626.)

'Who, according to His great mercy, has begotten us again' (1 Pet. 1. 3).

In his epistle, James associates our new birth with God's sovereign will: 'of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth' (James 1. 18).

In his first epistle, the apostle John associates our new birth with God's extraordinary love: 'Behold what manner of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God' (1 John 3. 1).

In his first epistle, Peter traces our new birth to God's 'great mercy'—to God's great feelings of pity for us in our wretched plight and miserable condition.

The thought, though not the phraseology, is identical to that expressed by Paul in chapter 2 of his epistle to the Ephesians (Ephesus being one of the key churches in the province of Asia, to which in part, Peter addressed this letter): 'God, being rich in mercy ... even when we were dead in our trespasses, quickened us ('made us alive') together with Christ' (Eph. 2. 4-5).

(Personal notes on 1 Pet. 1. 3.)

(iii) Go on, smile.

Newlyweds Hudson and Rachel are having marriage problems, so they decide to approach one of the elders in the assembly for help.

The elder asks Hudson, 'Tell me, what has brought you to the point where you are struggling to keep your marriage together?'

Hudson replies, 'In the six months we've been together, we haven't been able to agree on a single thing'.

Rachel interjects,

'Seven months'.