

## Malcolm's Monday Musings : 31 August 2020

Greetings.

This is your weekly 'Musings' email from me.

It was 332 years ago today (31 August 1688) that John Bunyan died in London. Most famous for his allegory 'Pilgrim's Progress', it is said that he published a total of 42 books. But, as far as is known, the renowned 'Tinker of Bedford' wrote only one hymn. Ponder today the first verse of that hymn (the original version):

Who would true valour see,  
Let him come hither;  
One here will constant be,  
Come wind, come weather  
There's no discouragement  
Shall make him once relent  
His first avowed intent  
To be a pilgrim.

And see the attached 'A shield to the soul' picture.

Yours in our Lord Jesus,

Malcolm

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### (i) Scripture.

Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

1 Peter 1. 10-12 (King James Version)

### (ii) Food for thought.

#### **God's limitless riches.**

'The riches of His glory' (Rom. 9. 23; Eph. 3. 16).

'The riches of His grace' (Eph. 1. 7; 2. 7).

'The riches of His goodness' (Rom. 2. 4).

#### **He will not let you ...**

(i) His power will not let you fall (Jude 24).

(ii) His faithfulness will not let you down (Heb. 10. 23).

(iii) His love will not let you go (2 Cor. 5. 14).

*'O Love that wilt not let me go,  
I rest my weary soul in thee;  
I give thee back the life I owe,  
That in thine ocean depths its flow  
May richer, fuller be'.  
(George Matheson)*

#### **Christ and the loaves.**

The One who had spent 40 days and nights in a wilderness (Greek 'ἐρημος') hungering with no loaves of bread, and who had then refused to provide so much as one loaf for Himself (Matt. 4. 1-4), would not let the crowds spend just one evening in a desert place (Greek 'ἐρημος') hungering with no loaves of bread, and He therefore provided more than enough loaves to satisfy them all (Matt. 14. 13-20).

#### **Christ and the cherubim.**

'The way' to the tree of life was closed off and guarded by the cherubim (Gen. 3. 24).

'The way' into the Holiest was opened up and consecrated through the sacrificial death of Christ (Heb. 10. 19-20).

**'I am the way, the truth, and the life' (John 14. 6).**

'In providing the way, He is the Way He provides.

In teaching the truth, He is the Truth He teaches.

In imparting the life, He is the Life He imparts'.

(C. J. Rolls, 'The Names and Titles of Jesus Christ: The Way'.)

**The quaking of the earth following Christ's death, and the rising of many saints following His resurrection (Matthew 27. 51-52).**

'Such wonderful testimony as "many saints" coming out of their graves after Christ's resurrection, surely was not useless to shew that death was then overcome ...

'As to the earthquake, I cannot see anything out of place in God's marking, by an event peculiarly calculated to attract attention and overawe the mind, the solemn moment of the death of His beloved and only-begotten Son ... I should have thought this eventful act of man's enmity against God, and the death of the Lord in the world which was made by Him, passing unnoticed and unmarked by some notable signal of its importance and character, would have been much more surprising'.

(J. N. Darby, 'The Irrationalism of Infidelity', Collected Writings, Volume 6, pages 173-177.)

**"I am ... the beginning and the end' (Rev. 21. 6; 22. 13).**

(i) Because (as is also the Throne-sitter) the Lord Jesus is 'the beginning', we know that there was never a preface.

(ii) Because the Lord Jesus is 'the end', we know that there will never be a postscript.

See the attached 'Christ – the End' picture.

**That which dwells 'in me' and that which dwells 'in Him'.**

(i) 'In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing' (Rom. 7. 18); 'Sin that dwells in me' (Rom. 7. 17, 20).

(ii) 'In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily' (Col. 2. 9).

**Ruth in the genealogy of Jesus (Matt. 1. 5-6).**

'The law does not keep Ruth out. Moabitess as she is, she does enter into the congregation of the Lord (cf. Deut. 23. 3). The law is set aside in her behalf, and instead of her descendants being excluded to the tenth generation, her child of the third generation (David) sits upon Israel's throne (Ruth 4. 17-22), and hears the promise which confirms that throne to his heirs for succeeding generations (2 Sam. 7. 12-16)'.

(F. W. Grant, 'The Women of the Genealogy', The Christian's Friend, 1875, page 16.)

**Four important 'Therefore's' in Paul's letter to the Romans.**

(i) Condemnation: 'Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight' (Rom. 3. 20).

(ii) Justification: 'Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ' (Rom. 5. 1).

(iii) Assurance: 'There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus' (Rom. 8. 1).

(iv) Consecration: 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God' (Rom. 12. 1).

**The trees.**

(i) The man behind a tree (Gen. 3. 8).

(ii) The man under a tree (John 1. 48).

(iii) The man up a tree (Luke 19. 4).

(iv) The man on a tree (1 Pet. 2. 24).

**Lot and Sodom.**

'In spite of the character of the people there (Gen. 13. 13)', Abraham's nephew Lot "'pitched his tent towards" ... Sodom (v. 12). The attraction of Sodom perhaps lay in its affluent society with plenty of ease and material prosperity (Ezek. 16. 49).

Notice the progression:

(i) he "beheld ... the plain",

(ii) he "chose ... the plain",

(iii) he "dwelled in ... the plain" (vv. 11-12).

Sight led to desire, which in turn led to action; cf. Josh. 7. 21; 2 Sam. 11. 2-4.

Beware, then, the lust of the eyes!

('Day by Day through the Old Testament', page 25.)

**Personal witness.**

'The right to talk intimately to another person about the Lord Jesus Christ has to be earned, and you earn it by convincing him that you are his friend, and really care about him'.

(J. I. Packer, 'Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God', page 81.)

### **God's purpose ('βουλή').**

- (i) The Pharisees rejected it to their loss (Luke 7. 30).
- (ii) David served it in his own generation (Acts 13. 36).
- (iii) Paul declared it in its entirety at Ephesus (Acts 20.27).

### **Bogus humility.**

'Nothing so much discovers to me the ... hypocrisy of my heart, as when any one is so cruelly kind as to tell me that all the mean things I say of myself are very true'.  
(John Berridge, 'The Life and Times of Selina Countess of Huntingdon', Volume 1, page 357).

### **Two great 'mysteries'.**

- (i) 'The mystery of lawlessness' (2 Thess. 2. 7). 'The man of sin' will 'be *revealed*' (v. 3) ... 'setting himself forth as God' (v. 4), and will be 'consumed' (v. 8).
- (ii) 'The mystery of godliness' (1 Tim. 3. 16). Our Lord Jesus, who truly was God, 'was *manifested* in the flesh', and was 'received up in glory'.

### **Morning activities.**

- (i) Praise: 'I will sing aloud of your mercy *in the morning*' (Psa. 59.16).
- (ii) Pray: '*In the morning* shall my prayer come before you' (Psa. 88. 13).
- (iii) Ponder: 'Cause me to hear your lovingkindness in the morning: for in you do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk' (Psa. 143. 8).
- (iv) Plant: '*In the morning* sow your seed, and at evening withhold not your hand, for you do not know which will prosper' (Eccles. 11. 6).

### **'An inheritance ... reserved in heaven for you', 1 Peter 1. 4.**

'We may well thank God that the "inheritance ... reserved in heaven" for us is "incorruptible and undefiled and unfading". Our inheritance stands secure: (i) untouched by death, (ii) unstained by sin, and (iii) unaffected by time. Our inheritance *cannot* (i) *be devastated*, (ii) *be contaminated*, or (iii) *be terminated*'.

(An extract from the attached Word document.)

**Detailed notes.** [See the attached Word document, '1 Peter 1. 3-12'.](#)

### **(iii) Go on, smile.**

After he had delivered a sermon about the duty of forgiveness, the preacher asked his congregation, 'How many of you can say that you have forgiven all your enemies?'

About half held up their hands.

The preacher rephrased his question: 'How many of you really want to forgive your enemies?'

Slowly, every hand in the congregation went up, except for one. Little old Mabel Hopkins.

'Mrs Hopkins', asked the preacher, 'Do you mean to tell us that, in spite of all I have said this evening, you are not willing to forgive your enemies?'

Smiling sweetly, Mrs Hopkins replied, 'But I don't have a single enemy'.

'That is marvellous', the preacher continued. 'Do you mind telling us how old you are?'

'Not at all', she answered. 'I have just turned ninety-eight'.

'Mrs Hopkins', the preacher responded, 'I can't tell you what a wonderful example you are to us all. Would you please stand up and tell the congregation how you have managed to live to your great age, and not have any enemies?'

Little old Mrs Hopkins rose up from her seat slowly, turned to face the congregation, and said quietly, 'Because *I have outlived all of those odious boneheads!*'

Each evening bird-lover Tom went out into his backyard, and did an imitation of an owl hooting. One night, Tom became ever so excited, because, finally, an owl called back to him.

For about six weeks, every evening Tom and his feathered friend hooted back and forth. He even kept a diary of their 'conversations'.

Just as he thought he was on the verge of a dramatic breakthrough in interspecies communication, his wife had a chat with her next door neighbour.

'I hardly see Tom nowadays', she complained, 'he spends all his evenings calling out to owls'.

'That's a strange coincidence', the neighbour replied, '*so does my husband!*'

John Bunyan



You can do more than pray after you have prayed, but you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed. Pray often, for prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God, and a scourge to Satan.

AZ QUOTES

*"The End"*

*Christ holds many titles that no other being could even attempt to adopt.*

*How truly befitting this is, that He who is the Originator of all things visible, should also be their Terminator.*

*- Charles J. Rolls*