

Malcolm's Monday Musings : 5 October 2020

(i) Scripture.

O Lord, you are my God; I will exalt you; I will praise your name, for you have done wonderful things, plans formed of old, faithful and sure ...

For you have been a stronghold to the poor, a stronghold to the needy in his distress, a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat ...

He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of His people He will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. It will be said on that day, "Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, that He might save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for Him; let us be glad and rejoice in His salvation'.

Isaiah 25. 1, 4, 8-9. (*English Standard version*)

(ii) Food for thought.

The love of God.

- (i) Poured out (Rom. 5. 5).
- (ii) Demonstrated (Rom. 5. 8).
- (iii) Revealed (Tit. 3. 4).
- (iv) Perfected (1 John 2. 5).
- (v) Bestowed (1 John 3. 1).
- (vi) Known (1 John 3. 16).
- (vii) Manifested (1 John 4. 9).
- (viii) Believed (1 John 4. 16).

Tempted to doubt.

'You say, "Mr Preacher, you don't know much about the temptations of real life. You've lived in an ivory castle of a university all your days. You don't know what it is in the rough and tumble of everyday life". No, I may not. I do know what spiritual battles are and battles for the mind and battles for the heart. Yes, and I thank God that I know a Saviour who, when my faith gets wobbly, and when I have come across intellectual difficulties, I've been able to say, "Please, Lord, over to you. You know the evidence I need. Please give me the evidence to establish my faith". And so he does'.
(David Gooding, *The Trinity: God's Revelation of Himself*.)

The Lord 'alone':

- (i) As *Maker in His creatorial achievement*: 'I am the Lord, who makes all things, who stretches out the heavens *all alone*, who spreads abroad the earth *by myself*' (Isa. 44. 24).
- (ii) As *Saviour in His cleansing work*: 'when He had *by Himself* purged our sins' (Heb. 1. 3; cf. Psa. 102. 7).
- (iii) As *Warrior in His crushing judgment*: 'I have trodden the winepress *alone*, and from the peoples *no one was with me*. For I have trodden them in my anger, and trampled them in my fury ... I looked, but there was *no one to help* ... I have trodden down the peoples in my anger' (Isa. 63. 3-6).

The unselfishness of Christ.

'The Gospels display the one in whom was no selfishness. They tell out the heart that was ready for everybody. No matter how deep His own sorrow, He always cared for others. He could warn Peter in Gethsemane, and comfort the dying thief on the cross ... What we find all through the life of Christ as shewn out in the Gospels, is the total absence of selfishness, never acting for self in any way whatever'.
(J. N. Darby, *The Man Christ Jesus*, Collected Writings: volume 16, pages 311-312.)

'Through the eternal Spirit' (Heb. 9. 14).

When Jesus offered Himself to God as the one who cleansed the consciences of believers through His blood, He did so through the Holy Spirit. What the author of Hebrews has in mind fits with the Lukan picture of the Spirit in the life of Jesus. In Luke Jesus was anointed with the Spirit at His baptism (Luke 3. 22), was "full of the Spirit" and "led by the Spirit in the wilderness" (Luke 4. 1), conducted His ministry "in the power of the Spirit" (Luke 4. 14), and emphasized at the outset of His ministry the role of the Spirit in anointing him (Luke 4. 18). Probably the author of Hebrews has the same conception in mind. Jesus gave himself up as a sacrifice for sins under the impetus of the Spirit—the Spirit empowered Him in his ministry and His self-giving'.
(Thomas R. Schreiner, *The Trinity in Hebrews*, The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology 24.1.)

Seven who are 'blessed' in the Book of Revelation.

The one who:

- (i) Reads (Rev. 1. 3)
- (ii) Keeps (Rev. 1. 3; 22. 7)
- (iii) Dies in the Lord (Rev. 14. 13)
- (iv) Watches (Rev. 16. 15)
- (v) Is called to the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19. 9)
- (vi) Has part in the first resurrection (Rev. 20. 6)
- (vii) Does God's commandments (Rev. 22. 14)

Accountable for knowledge and privilege.

'Paul makes the general point that God judges people by what they know, not by what they do not know. Hence: "All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law", (Rom. 2. 12). Jesus had similarly tied human responsibility to human privilege: the more we know, the more severely we are held accountable (Matt. 11. 20-24)'. (D. A. Carson, *'For the Love of God'*, August 12.)

The Lord working:

- (i) For us: 'it may be that the Lord will work *for us*' (1 Sam. 14. 6).
- (ii) In us: 'it is God who works *in you* both to will and to do for His good pleasure' (Phil. 2. 13); 'working *in you* what is well pleasing in His sight' (Heb. 13, 21).
- (iii) Through us: 'we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading *through us*' (2 Cor. 5. 20).
- (iv) With us: 'they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working *with them*' (Mark 16. 20).

Quotations from the writings of Lillias Trotter, missionary to Algeria:

- (i) 'Trained faith is a triumphant gladness in having nothing but God – not rest, no foothold – nothing but Himself. *A triumphant gladness in swinging out into that abyss, rejoicing in every fresh emergency that is going to prove Him true.* "The Lord alone" – that is trained faith', 9 September 1902.
 - (ii) 'I am full of hope that when God delays in fulfilling our little thoughts, it is to leave Himself room to work out His great ones', 29 December 1903.
 - (iii) 'Take the very hardest thing in your life – the place of difficulty, outward or inward – and *expect God to triumph gloriously* in that very spot. Just there He can bring your soul into blossom!' ... from the booklet entitled *'Parables of the Cross'*. (See the attached 'The very hardest thing', picture.)
 - (iv) In the context of the Christian being 'dead with Christ' (Rom. 6. 8), she writes about the 'lesson of dying – a grand independence of any earthly thing to satisfy or soul. *The liberty of those who have nothing to lose because they have nothing to keep.* We can do without anything while we have God' ... from the booklet entitled *'Parables of the Cross'*.
 - (v) '*Turn full your soul's vision to Jesus, and look and look at Him, and a strange dimness will come over all that is apart from Him, and the Divine 'attrait' ['appeal', 'attraction'] by which God's saints are made ... will lay hold of you. For "He is worthy" to have all there is to be had in the heart that He has died to win' ... from the booklet entitled 'Focussed'.*
- (If you want to know more of Lillias Trotter's remarkable story, you will need to read the attached Word document.)

Detailed notes. [See the attached Word document, 'Saved by my good looks'.](#)

(iii) Go on, smile.

1. Unruly Welsh air passengers.

The KLM plane had just landed at Cardiff Airport. The chief flight attendant made the following announcement:

'Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Cardiff Airport. The local time is half past nine.

For your safety and comfort, please remain seated with your seat-belt fastened until the Captain turns off the Fasten Seat Belt sign. This will indicate that we have parked at the gate and that it is safe for you to move about. For now, the use of mobile phones is strictly prohibited. These can only be used once the Fasten Seat Belt sign has been turned off.

To those law-abiding passengers who are still seated with your belts fastened, I say, "Welcome to Wales", I hope that you enjoy your stay.

To those unruly passengers who are *already* standing in the aisles and chattering away on your mobile phones ... *Croeso adref ... Welcome back home'.*

See the attached 'Missed!' picture.

2. Scottish initiative.

Pranav Chabra was a young Indian student who was backpacking through Scotland. When spending a few nights in Edinburgh, he was invited to a large meeting.

But somehow, during the meeting, he lost his wallet. As soon as he discovered this, Pranav climbed onto a chair and shouted out, 'Excuse me please, ladies and gentlemen, but I've just lost my wallet with almost £500 in it. I'll give £50 to the person who finds my wallet and returns it to me'.

A deep Scottish brogue immediately boomed from the back of the hall, '*I'll gee £75*'.

(The Irish get away 'scot free' this week.)



“Take the very hardest thing in your life – the place of difficulty, outward or inward, and expect God to triumph gloriously in that very spot. Just there He can bring your soul into blossom.”

