

## Malcolm's Monday Musings : 8 February 2021

Greetings.

This is my 'Monday Musings' email.

You may recall that last Monday I informed you that last week's lengthy Word document ('Lessons from Joshua 22') should suffice to keep you occupied this week as well.

That document included (on page 6) an anecdote concerning the non-existent church bells of Saint-Philippe du Roule in Paris.

In the absence of an attached document for this week, I thought that you might enjoy another church bells anecdote:

'It is said that during Napoleon's Austrian campaign, his army advanced to within six miles of the town of Feldkirch. It looked as though his men would take it without resistance. But as Napoleon's army advanced toward their objective in the night, the Christians of Feldkirch gathered in their little church to pray. It was Easter eve.

The next morning at sunrise, the bells of the village pealed out across the countryside. Napoleon's army, not realizing it was Easter Sunday, thought that in the night the Austrian army had moved into Feldkirch and the bells were ringing in jubilation. Napoleon ordered a retreat, and the battle at Feldkirch never took place.

The Easter bells caused the enemy to flee, and peace reigned in the Austrian countryside. As Easter is celebrated each year, churches and cathedrals around the world will ring their bells—not to sound Christ's death knell but *to declare Christ's victory over death*'.

(Billy Graham, 'Hope for Each Day', meditation for 10 April.)

You may wish to compare the inspired account of something similar that happened in the days of Elisha, when the Lord made Benhadad's army flee from Israel on hearing a noise which they (wrongly) thought heralded the imminent arrival of a great opposing army (2 Kings 7. 6-7).

Yours in our Lord Jesus,

Malcolm

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### (i) Scripture.

What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith ...

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3. 7-14 (King James Version)

### (ii) Food for thought.

#### Jesus speaking in the Gospel of John.

(i) Speaking to *the world* (John 1-12).

(ii) Speaking to *His own* (John 13-16).

(iii) Speaking to *the Father* (John 17).

#### **The versatile Christ in the Gospel according to John.**

(i) At the wedding feast, the Lord Jesus '*transformed what was unsuitable*' (John 2. 6-12).

(ii) In the desert, He *multiplied what was inadequate* (John 6. 8-12).

(iii) On the shore, He *collected what was inaccessible* (John 21. 5-11).

How versatile is the Son of God in meeting the needs of men!

(Tony Renshaw, '*Day by Day: Moments with the Master*' (Precious Seed Publications), page 43.)

#### **'Love' in John 3. 16.**

(i) The *Source*: 'For God so loved'.

- (ii) The Scope: 'so loved the world ... that whosoever'.
- (iii) The Sacrifice: 'that He gave His only begotten Son'.
- (iv) The Scheme: 'that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life'.

See the attached 'Gospel in John 3. 16' picture.

#### **'Divine Love in Varied Aspects'.**

- (i) Love of Compassion (John 3. 16)—For Sinners.
- (ii) Love of Relationship (1 John 3. 1)—To Children.
- (iii) Love of Communion (John 14. 23)—To Obedient Ones.  
(John Ritchie, '500 Bible Subjects', page 22.)

#### **Six statements which Jesus made containing the words 'My Father's'.**

- (i) 'My Father's kingdom' (Matt. 26. 29).
- (ii) 'My Father's business' (Luke 2. 49).
- (iii) 'My Father's house' (John 2. 16; 14. 2).
- (iv) 'My Father's name' (John 5. 43; 10. 25).
- (v) 'My Father's hand' (John 10. 29).
- (vi) 'My Father's commandments' (John 15. 10).

#### **'Let God be true' (Rom. 3. 4).**

Listen to:

- (i) Balaam: 'God is not a man, *that He should lie* ... hath He said, and shall He not do it? (Num. 23. 19).
- (ii) Samuel: 'The *Strength of Israel will not lie* nor repent: for He is not a man' (1 Sam. 15. 29).
- (iii) Paul: 'God, *that cannot lie*' (Tit. 1. 2).
- (iv) The Writer to the Hebrews: 'It is *impossible for God to lie*' (Heb. 6. 18).

By way of contrast, listen to what the Lord Jesus said of the devil: 'When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar' (John 8. 44).

#### **'Of truth'.**

- (i) 'Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth' (Psa. 31. 5).
- (ii) 'I have chosen the way of truth' (Psa. 119. 30).
- (iii) 'The lip of truth shall be established for ever' (Prov. 12. 19).
- (iv) 'I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth' (Dan 10. 21).
- (v) 'The law of truth was in his mouth' (Mal. 2. 6).
- (vi) 'When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth' (John 16. 13).
- (vii) 'A workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth' (2 Tim. 2. 15).

#### **Walking, standing and sitting.**

The Book of Psalms opens with the beatitude, 'Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful' (Psa. 1. 1).

But, in contrast, blessed is the man (i) who, as *Enoch and Noah*, walks with God (Gen. 5. 22, 24; 6. 9), (ii) who, as *Elijah and Elisha*, stands before the Lord (1 Kings 17. 1; 18. 15; 2 Kings 3. 14; 5. 16) and (iii) who, as *David*, sits before the Lord (2 Sam. 7. 18; 1 Chron. 17. 16).

#### **'He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich' (2 Cor. 8. 9).**

'He "became" poor. It was not that He was "made" poor.

Although this is the only time that this particular verb is found in the New Testament, it occurs several times in the Greek Old Testament, but only to describe those who *were impoverished*, either by others (e.g. Judg. 6. 6) or as a result of their own sin and folly (e.g. Prov. 23. 21). Only here in the entire Greek Bible is this verb used of poverty which was experienced *voluntarily*, of that which was self-inflicted.

'Paul clearly wants us to grasp that the Lord Jesus *chose* to *renounce* His heavenly glory ... that He *chose to relinquish* His inexhaustible riches!

'And He did it that we, who were spiritually 'poor' and utterly bankrupt before God, might become rich. What a tremendous exchange. The Lord Jesus went, so to speak, *from riches to rags* that we might go from *rags to riches*. He became poor that we might become joint-heirs with Him (Rom. 8. 17). Wonder of wonders! In God's sight ... we are not only out of debt, but we have also inherited a fortune!

(Quoted from the document '2 Corinthians 8' – attached to the Monday Musings dated 24 August 2020 – page 6.)

#### **The names of God's people.**

When Aaron entered into the presence of the Lord, he bore the names of the children of Israel 'before the Lord', both (i) 'upon his two shoulders' (Exod. 28. 12) and (ii) 'in the breastplate' (Exod. 28. 29), 'as a memorial' (that the Lord might remember them).

'Thus Aaron could not go into the holy place without God's continually remembering Israel. The Lord Jesus, "our great High Priest", bears the name of every believer "before the Lord continually",

representing us before God ... God cannot look at Christ without thinking of you and me, because He bears our names continually before Him'.

(F. K., *'The Present Priesthood of Christ'*, *The Christian's Friend* (1877), pages 65-66.)

See where our great High Priest  
Before the Lord appears!  
And on His loving breast  
The tribes of Israel bears:  
*Never without His people seen.*  
The Head of all believing men.

(John and Charles Wesley, *'Hymns on the Lord's Supper'*, number 129.)

### ***The apostle Peter and the sufferings of Christ.***

Simon Peter had objected violently to the idea that Christ should suffer from (i) our Lord's first open announcement of this at Caesarea Philippi (Matt. 16. 21-22) through to (ii) the time of our Lord's arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane (John 18. 10).

But, later, he refers gladly to the sufferings of Christ at least once in every chapter of his first epistle (1 Pet. 1. 11; 2. 21, 23; 3. 18; 4. 1, 13; 5. 1).

### ***Three Bible 'bombshell' names which led to dramatic recognition.***

(i) 'Joseph' (Gen. 45. 3).

(ii) 'Mary' (John 20. 16).

(iii) 'Jesus' (Acts 9. 5).

### ***'My sins are gone!'***

'Where are my sins now? where are they to be found in heaven or on earth? I see Christ in the glory. Once they were found upon the head of that blessed One; but they are gone, never more to be found. Were it a dead Christ, so to speak, that I saw, I might fear that my sins would be found again; but with Christ alive in the glory the search is in vain. He who bore them all has been received up to the throne of God, and no sin can be there'.

(J. N. Darby, *'The Accepted Man'*, *Collected Writings*, Volume 12, page 338.)

Gone, gone, gone, gone,  
Yes, my sins are gone!  
Now my soul is free  
And in my heart's a song!  
Buried in the deepest sea,  
Yes, that's good enough for me!  
I shall live eternally.  
Praise God! My sins are gone!  
*Helen Griggs*

### ***'That I may ... be found in Him' (Phil. 3. 8-9).***

'We read in the papers this week, how a man was saved from being shot. He had been condemned in a Spanish court, but being an American citizen and also of English birth, the consuls of the two countries interposed, and declared that the Spanish authorities had no power to put him to death, and what did they do to secure his life?

They wrapped him up in their flags, they covered him with the Stars and Stripes and the Union Jack, and defied the executioners. "Now fire a shot if you dare, for if you do you defy the nations represented by those flags, and you will bring the powers of those two great nations upon you".

There stood the man, and before him the soldiery, and though a shot might soon have ended his life, yet he was as invulnerable as though in coat of triple steel.

Even so, Jesus Christ has taken my poor guilty soul ever since I believed in Him, and has *wrapped around me the blood-red flag of His atoning sacrifice*, and before God can destroy me or any other soul that is wrapped in the atonement, He must insult His Son and dishonour this sacrifice, and that He never will do, blessed be His name'.

(C. H. Spurgeon, *'Real Grace for Real Need'*, a sermon preached in the Metropolitan Tabernacle on 5 September 1869. Accessed at <https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/real-grace-for-real-need/#flipbook/>.)

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

1. An Irishman had two horses, but he couldn't tell them apart.

He cut off one horse's mane, but it grew back; he cut off the tail, but that grew back, too.

A friend suggested that he measure the horses.

The Irishman did as his friend suggested. Quickly, he phoned his friend. 'That was a great idea 'o yours', he said, 'Sure enough, *the black one was two inches taller than the white one*'.

2. A man telephoned a lawyer and asked, 'How much would you charge for answering three simple questions?'

'Nine hundred pounds', the lawyer replied.

'Nine hundred pounds!!' the man exclaimed. 'That's rather a lot, isn't it?'

'Yes, I guess it is', agreed the lawyer. 'Now, *what's your third question?*'

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