

Malcolm's Monday Musings : 4 April 2022.

This is my 'Monday Musings' email - the first after a long break. Welcome back.

This week, you will find **two separate attachments**.

Today marks the anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee, US, on the 4th of April 1968.

The following are some helpful comments (which he wrote sometime before his death) on the 'Parable of the Good Samaritan':

'I can imagine that the first question which the Priest and the Levite asked was: "if I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?" Then the good Samaritan came by, and by the very nature of his concern reversed the question: "if I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?" ...

'Not only did he bind up the man's wounds, but he put him on his beast and carried him to an inn. On leaving the inn he left some money and made it clear that if any other financial needs arose he would gladly meet them ...

'His love was complete. He could have stopped so much sooner than this and more than fulfilled any possible rule about one's duty to a wounded stranger. He went not only the second, but the third mile'.

(Source: 'The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr.', Volume VI: 'Strength to Love', chapter 3: 'On Being a Good Neighbour'.)

Taking this quotation as my cue, [I am attaching a practical exposition of 'The Parable of the Good Samaritan'](#). This exposition is reproduced (with permission) from two articles carrying that same title which were first published in the 'Precious Seed' magazine in 2009 – Volume 64, Issues 1 and 2. (Apart from a few 'cosmetic' changes, an expansion of Note 12 and the addition of Note 38, I have made no attempt to update or amend the original exposition in any way.)

For now, here is a 'taster' from the 'Introduction':

'The injured man is regarded differently by each of these characters and groups:

- (i) to the robbers, he is **a victim to be exploited**;
- (ii) to the priest and the Levite, he is **a nuisance to be shunned**;
- (iii) to the innkeeper, he is **a business proposition**; but
- (iv) to the Samaritan, he is **a neighbour needing help**.

'Putting it another way:

- (i) the robbers **create** the problem;
- (ii) the priest and the Levite **ignore** the problem;
- (iii) the innkeeper **treats** the problem **professionally**; and
- (iv) the Samaritan **solves** the problem.

'And each character or group in the story has a different motto and philosophy of life. Simply stated:

- (i) the motto of the robbers was **'Yours is mine if I can get it'**;
- (ii) the motto of the priest and Levite was **'Mine is my own if I can keep it'**;
- (iii) the motto of the innkeeper was **'Mine is yours if you can pay for it'**; and
- (iv) the motto of the Samaritan was **'Mine is yours if you need it'**.

Separately, I am attaching the main 'Musings' for today.

Happy reading.

Malcolm

(i) Scripture

Love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever because

‘All flesh is as grass,
And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass.
The grass withers,
And its flower falls away,
But the word of the Lord endures forever’.

Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

1 Peter 1. 22-2.3 (The New King James Version)

(ii) Food for thought.

‘You have repaid me good, whereas I have repaid you evil’ (1 Sam. 24. 17); ‘he has returned me evil for good’ (1 Sam. 25. 21).

‘To render good for evil is **divine**, to render good for good is **human**, to render evil for evil is **brutish**; but to render evil for good is **devilish**’.

(Thomas Brooks, ‘*Precious Remedies Against Satan’s Devices*’, page 73.)

Reverence in worship.

‘The first element in worship is adoration. The Hebrews expressed this by their posture and not alone by their word. For they prostrated themselves before God. “O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker” (Psa. 95. 6) ... They did not come with an easy familiarity into the presence of God, but were aware of His greatness and majesty, and came with a sense of privilege to His house’.

(H. H. Rowley, ‘*Worship in Ancient Israel: Its Form and Meaning*’, page 257.)

Better than a burnt offering.

‘Six things better than a burnt offering!

1. Obedience (1 Sam. 15. 22).
2. Humility (Psa. 51.16-17).
3. The knowledge of God (Hos. 6. 6).
4. Thankfulness (Psa. 69. 30-32).
5. Love for the Lord and for our neighbours (Mark 12. 32-33).

And, of course, there is

6. The Supreme Sacrifice (Psa. 40. 6-8; Heb. 10. 8-9), Christ, the fulfilment of them all.’

(J. B. Nicholson Jr., ‘*Better Than That?*’, Uplook Ministries: Taste and See, 9 March 2022.)

‘The Word was God ... the Word was made flesh’ (John 1. 1, 14).

‘The restoration of human nature ... could not be effected unless man paid to God what he owed for sin, and which debt was so great that no one ought to pay for it who was not man, no one could pay for it who was not God, so that the same person must be both man and God’.

(Anselm {1033-1109 AD}, ‘*Cur Deus Homo*’ {translated by E. S. Prout}, Book II, Chapter XVIII, Part I.)

Undefiled and undefilable.

1. ‘He touched the leper, and He touched the bier, and yet He was undefiled. He had God’s relationship to sin; He knew good and evil, but was in Divine supremacy over it; knowing such things as God knows them. Had He been other than He was, these touches of the bier and of the leper would have defiled Him. He must have been put outside the camp, and gone through the cleansing which the law prescribed. But nothing of this kind do we see in Him. He was not an unclean Jew; He was not merely undefiled, He was undefilable’.

(J. G. Bellett, ‘*The Moral Glory of the Lord Jesus Christ*’, page 37.)

2. The Lord told Moses, ‘Command the children of Israel, that they put out of the camp (i) every leper, and (ii) every one that hath an issue, and (iii) whosoever is defiled by a dead person ... outside the camp you shall put them, that they defile not their camps, in the midst whereof I dwell’ (Num. 5. 2-3).

Doctor Luke records that the Lord Jesus (i) **'touched'** a leper (Luke 5. 12-13); (ii) was 'touched' by a woman with an issue of blood (Luke 8. 43-47); and (iii) both 'touched' the bier carrying a dead man (Luke 7. 12-14) and took the hand of a dead girl (Luke 8. 51-54).

Yet, far from contracting defilement Himself, our Lord's physical contact brought cleansing and life to others. He was ever 'undefiled' and 'undefilable'. Even so, in grace, as the great antitype of the bodies of the sin offerings offered annually on the Day of Atonement, which were burned 'outside the camp', He 'suffered outside the gate' that He might sanctify us (Heb. 13. 11-12).

When Jesus and a leper 'traded places' (Mark 1. 40-45).

'An adverse irony results. Jesus has relieved the leper of his burden, but in broadcasting the news the leper imposes a burden on Jesus, for "He could no longer enter a town openly but stayed outside in lonely places".'

Mark began this story with Jesus on the inside and the leper on the outside. At the end of the story, Jesus is "outside in lonely places". Jesus and the leper have traded places'.

(J. R. Edwards, '*The Gospel according to Mark {The Pillar New Testament Commentary}*', on Mark 1. 45.)

'But'.

'In His human nature He had no father, but in His divine nature no mother ...

He was laid in a manger—but He was glorified by angels, proclaimed—by a star, and worshipped by the Magi ...

He had no form nor comeliness in the eyes of the Jews—but to David He is fairer than the children of men ...

He hungered—but He fed thousands; yea, He is the Bread that giveth life ...

He thirsted—but He cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink"; yea, He promised that fountains should flow from them that believe.

He was wearied—but He is the Rest of them that are weary and heavy laden.

He was heavy with sleep—but He ... rebuked the winds

He pays tribute—but it is out of a fish ...

He prays—but He hears prayer.

He weeps—but He causes tears to cease ...

He is sold, and very cheap, for it is only for thirty pieces of silver—but He redeems the world, and that at a great price, for the price was His own blood.

As a sheep He is led to the slaughter—but He is the Shepherd of Israel, and now of the whole world also ...

He is given vinegar to drink mingled with gall—but turned the water into wine ...

He lays down His life—but He has power to take it again ... and by His death destroys death'.

(Gregory of Nazianzus {329-390 AD}, '*Theological Oration 3: On the Son*', paragraphs 19-20.)

'He is able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them' (Heb. 7. 25).

According to the law of Moses, the manslayer 'must remain in his city of refuge until the death of the high priest, but after the death of the high priest the manslayer may return to the land of his possession' (Num. 35. 28).

The very last thing that an Israelite guilty of unintentional killing wanted was a high priest who lived forever! But *that* is the very High Priest that we need ... and, praise God, that we have!

'Jesus Christ, the ...'.

(i) 'Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham' (Matt. 1. 1).

(ii) 'Jesus Christ, the Son of God' (Mark 1. 1).

(iii) 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever' (Heb. 13. 8).

(iv) 'Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory' (James 2. 1).

(v) 'Jesus Christ, the righteous' (1 John 2. 1).

(vi) 'Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth' (Rev. 1. 5).

Now and then.

'Let all true Christians remember that their best things are yet to come. Let us count it no strange thing if we have sufferings in this present time.

It is a season of probation: we are yet at school. We are learning patience, longsuffering, gentleness, and meekness, which we could hardly learn if we had our good things now. But there is an eternal holiday yet to begin.

For this let us wait quietly: it will make amends for all. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. 4. 17)'.
(J. C. Ryle, '*Expository Thoughts on Matthew*'. page 161.)

Humbled at the foot of the cross.

'Every time we look at the cross, Christ seems to say to us, "I am here because of you. It is your sin I am bearing, your curse I am suffering, your debt I am paying, your death I am dying".

'Nothing in history or in the universe cuts us down to size like the cross. All of us have inflated views of ourselves, especially in self-righteousness, until we have visited a place called Calvary.

'It is there, at the foot of the cross, that we shrink to our true size'.

(John Stott, *'The Message of Galatians'*, page 179.)

How to read the Bible.

'As Christ saith, "Take heed, how you hear";' so I say, "Take heed how you read" ...

'Value it a thousand-fold more than you would do the letters of your dearest friend, or the deeds by which you hold your lands ... If the law was sweeter to David than honey, and better than thousands of gold and silver, and was his delight and meditation all the day, O what should the sweet and precious Gospel be to us! ...

'Presume not on the strength of your own understanding, but humbly pray to God for light, and, before and after you read the Scripture, pray earnestly that the Spirit which did indite it may expound it to you and keep you from unbelief and error and lead you into the truth'.

(Richard Baxter, *'Directions for profitable reading the Holy Scriptures'*, A Christian Directory: Christian Economics', Chapter XX, Directions III and VIII.)

'Upside down'.

The Jews of Thessalonica complained that Paul and his companions had 'turned the world upside down' (Acts 17. 6). In one sense, in doing so, they had acted as God's servants in that the scripture says, 'the way of the wicked He turns upside down' (Psa. 146. 9).

In another sense, it would have been more accurate for the Jews to have said that, in declaring the gospel of God, Paul and his companions were in the business of 'turning the world the right way up'!

Tough yet gentle.

'The prophet must needs have the heart of a child and the hide of a rhinoceros. *His problem is how to toughen his hide without hardening his heart.* That combination can be achieved only by the grace of God'.

(Vance Havner, *'In Times Like These'*, page 101.)

In hot pursuit.

(i) 'Follow after the things which make for peace' (Rom. 14. 19).

(ii) 'Follow after love and earnestly desire spiritual gifts' (1 Cor. 14. 1).

(iii) 'Follow after that which is good' (1 Thess. 5. 15).

(iv) 'Follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance' (1 Tim. 6. 11).

(v) 'Follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace' (2 Tim. 2. 22).

(vi) 'Follow after peace with all' (Heb. 12. 14).

'It is finished' (John 19. 30); 'He who has begun a good work in you will complete it' (Phil. 1. 6).

'Did Christ finish His work for us? Then there can be no doubt but He will also finish His work in us'.

(John Flavel, *'The Fountain of Life Opened'*, page 431.)

'A crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give' (2 Tim. 4. 8).

'When the just Judge gives crowns at last, some of the very brightest will flash on unexpected brows'.

(Samuel Coley, quoted in R. P. Downes, *'Samuel Coley: The Illustrative Preacher'*, page 80.)

'The deceitfulness of sin' (Heb. 3. 13).

'The little boy says to his mother, "Why is it whenever I do anything bad, it's because I'm a bad boy; but whenever you do anything bad, it's because you're nervous?"

'It is nerves rather than sin. It is our glands rather than sin. It is what we eat, the environment, our biorhythm, rather than sin, it is anything but sin. Sin denies that it is sin'.

(John H. Gerstner, *'The Problem of Pleasure'*, page 4.)

'Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you' (James 4. 7-8).

'There are two views the Christian ought to covet more than any other: one is the devil's back and the other is God's face — and James promises that he can enjoy both!'

(John Blanchard, *Truth for Life: A Devotional Commentary on the Epistle of James*, page 285.)

'Born again ... through the ... word of God ... desire the pure spiritual milk' (1 Pet. 1. 23; 2. 2).
'The Christian is *bred* by the Word, and he must be *fed* by it'.

(William Gurnall, *The Christian in Complete Armour*, {printed 1862}, page 547.)

'I am Alpha and Omega' (Rev. 1. 11; 22. 13).

'He is Alpha; He is also Omega. *The whole alphabet of revelation* between the first letter and the last does but spell out the golden legend of His unalterable glory'.

(H. C. G. Moule, *Messages from the Epistle to the Hebrews*, page 81.)

(iii) Go on, smile.

Domesticated husbands?

1. (Quoted from: Derek Bingham, *Encouragement: the Oxygen of the Soul*, page 16.)

The story is told of the chap who was always going to the local church services. Monday night he was at this service, Tuesday night at that service, etc. One evening his exasperated wife challenged him as to where he was going.

"Oh!" he replied, "Tonight is missionary night. There's a missionary showing a set of slides entitled, 'Going through Africa with a camel'. I'm looking forward to it".

"You're not going", his wife said, emphatically.

"And why not?" questioned her husband.

"Because you are going into the kitchen to *go through china with a dishcloth!*", she replied.

2. George was always telling his wife, Susan, that housekeeping would be much easier if only she would organize her time better. Recently, he had a chance to put his theory into practice while Susan was away.

When a friend popped in one evening to see how George was managing, George boasted,

'I have been very busy and have managed to get a whole lot of jobs done. First, I made a cake and topped it with chocolate whipped cream. Then I washed all the kitchen windows, cleaned all the cupboards, scrubbed the kitchen floor, the walls and the ceiling ... and I even had a bath'.

His friend was about to concede that, undoubtedly, George was a better housekeeper than Susan, when George added, rather sheepishly,

'To tell you the truth, when I was whisking the chocolate cream, I forgot to turn off the electric mixer before lifting the whisk out of the bowl ... *and so, the other jobs!*'