

Malcolm's Monday Musings : 11 April 2022.

(i) Scripture

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word ... that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved me.

Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which Thou hast given me: for Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee: but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

John 17. 20-26 (*The King James Version*)

(ii) Food for thought.

The love of the Father for the Son.

'There is a sevenfold cord of love between the Father and the Son, mentioned in the Gospel according to John.

(i) Committal of Love. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand" (John 3. 35).

(ii) Complacency of Love. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life" (John 10. 17).

(iii) Communion of Love. "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you" (John 15. 9).

(iv) Co-equality of Love. "Thou.....hast loved them, as Thou hast loved me" (John 17. 23).

(v) Character of Love. Eternal. "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (John 17. 24).

(vi) Constrainment of Love. "The love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them" (John 17. 26).

(vii) Communication of Love. "The Father loveth the Son and sheweth Him all things that Himself doeth" (John 5. 20)'.
(F. E. Marsh, *Five Hundred Bible Readings*, pages 174-175.)

The uniqueness of Jesus.

'This Jesus of Nazareth:

(i) without money and arms, conquered more millions than Alexander, Caesar, Mohammed, and Napoleon;

(ii) without science and learning, He shed more light on things human and divine than all philosophers and scholars combined;

(iii) without the eloquence of schools, He spoke such words of life as were never spoken before or since, and produced effects which lie beyond the reach of orator or poet;

(iv) without writing a single line, He set more pens in motion, and furnished themes for more sermons, orations, discussions, learned vocabulary, works of art, and songs of praise than the whole army of great men of ancient and modern times.

'There never was in this world a life so unpretending, modest, and lowly in its outward form and condition, and yet producing such extraordinary effects upon all ages, nations, and classes of men ... Christ stands, in this respect also, solitary and alone among all the heroes of history, and presents to us an insolvable problem, unless we admit Him to be more than man, even the eternal Son of God'.

(Philip Schaff, *The Person of Christ: The Miracle of History*, pages 49-50.)

'He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes' (Matt. 7. 29).

'Any other Jewish teacher made very sure that his teaching was documented with extensive quotations from Scripture and with the names of his teachers added to give weight to his opinion; *his authority must always be second-hand. But not Jesus*'.

(R.T. France, *Jesus the Radical*, page 204.)

'The great exchange'.

'I gave Him a crown of thorns; He gave me a crown of righteousness.

I gave Him a cross to carry; He gave me His yoke which is easy, His burden which is light.

I gave Him nails through His hands; He gave me safely into His Father's hands from which no power can pluck me.

I gave Him a mock title, "This is the King of the Jews"; He gave me a new name and made me a king and a priest to God.

I gave Him no covering, stripping His clothes from Him; He gave me a garment of salvation.

I gave Him mockery, casting the same in His teeth; He gave me Paradise.

I gave Him vinegar to drink; He gave me Living Water.

I crucified and slew Him on a tree; He gave me eternal life.

It was my sinfulness that put Him there; it is His sinlessness that puts me here'.

(Derick Bingham, *'Encouragement: Oxygen for the Soul'*, pages 157-158.)

'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain' (Rev. 5. 12).

'One is taken aback by the emphasis upon the cross in the [Book of the] Revelation. Heaven does not "get over" the cross, as if there are better things to think about ... Heaven is not only Christ-centred, it is cross-centred, and quite blaring about it'.

(Jim Ellif, *'The Glory of the Lamb'*, being chapter 4 of *'The Glory of Christ'*, edited by J. H. Armstrong, pages 77-78.)

The gospel and Jesus' resurrection.

'There is no gospel without the cross ... Even the resurrection, important as it is in the total scheme of things, is no gospel by itself. For the good news is not just that God became man, nor that God has spoken to reveal a proper way of life for us, or even that death, the great enemy, is conquered.

'Rather, the good news is that sin has been dealt with (of which the resurrection is a proof); that Jesus has suffered its penalty for us as our representative, so that we might never have to suffer it ... The resurrection is not merely a victory over death (though it is that) but a proof that the atonement was a satisfactory atonement in the sight of the Father (Rom. 4. 25); and that death, the result of sin, is abolished on that basis'.

(James Montgomery Boice, *'God the Redeemer'*, page 156.)

Sin and Death: 'In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die' (Gen. 2. 17).

(i) Sin is a *fatal disease*. This is the operation of Physical Law (Jam. 1. 15).

(ii) Sin is a *terrible master*. This is the operation of Economic Law (Rom. 6. 23).

(iii) Sin is a *punishable offence*. This is the operation of Criminal Law (Ezek. 18. 20).

(A. Naismith, *'1200 Scripture Outlines'*, page 1.)

Sin and the sin offering (Lev. 4).

'One of the most important facts about sin is, first and foremost, that it is against God. Notice the three statements:

1. "If a person sins unintentionally against any of the commandments of the Lord" (Lev. 4. 2). The sin is *against the Lord*.

2. "Then let him offer to the Lord for his sin which he has sinned" (Lev. 4. 3). The offering is *to the Lord*.

3. "He shall bring the bull to the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the LORD, lay his hand on the bull's head, and kill the bull before the Lord" (Lev. 4. 4). The sacrifice is made *before the Lord*—in other words, He is right there!

This should be a great preventative against the temptation to sin'.

(J. B. Nicholson Jr., *'Before the Lord'*, Uplook Ministries: Taste and See, 24 March 2022.)

See also: (i) 'how then can I do this great wickedness, and *sin against God?*' (Gen. 39. 9); (ii) *'Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight'* (Psa. 51. 4); and (iii) *'I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight'* (Luke 15. 21).

Repentance.

'You cannot repent *too soon*, because you do not know *how soon* it may be *too late*'.

(Thomas Fuller, cited by C. H. Spurgeon, *'The Treasury of David'*, Explanatory Notes on Psa. 95. 7.)

'Thou hatest all workers of iniquity' (Psa. 5. 5).

'The cliché ("God hates the sin but loves the sinner") is false on the face of it and should be abandoned. Fourteen times in the first fifty Psalms alone, we are told that God hates the sinner, His wrath is on the liar, and so forth. In the Bible, the wrath of God rests both on the sin (Rom. 1. 18ff) and on the sinner (John 3. 36).

(D. A. Carson, *'The Difficult Doctrine of the Love of God'*, page 69.)

'Make us a king to judge us like all the nations' (1 Sam. 8. 5).

'It had been God's purpose from the first that there should be kings in Israel, and doubtless He would, in His own time, have raised up David "to fulfil all" His will and to establish the royal line which would reach its climax and conclusion in the Messiah, 'the Son of David'; cp. Gen. 17. 6; 35. 11; 49. 10; 1 Sam. 2. 10, 35; Acts 13. 22.

'But Israel went badly astray here in that, as far as a king was concerned, they wanted (a) *the wrong kind*, (b) *for the wrong reason*, and (c) *at the wrong time*.

Deuteronomy 17 envisaged the day when Israel would have a king, but God made it plain there that He did not intend him to be the same kind of monarch as the kings of the nations around. Israel's king was to claim none of the customary royal perks, whether in terms of (i) military machine, (ii) multiple wives or (iii) massive wealth, Deut. 17. 16-17.

'But Israel now asked for a king that they might be "like all the nations". Yet God had made it clear that His intention for His people was that they should be separate and different from those around them, Exod. 19. 5-6; Num. 23. 9'.

(*'Living in the Promised Land'*, Precious Seed Publications, page 111.)

Blessed is he who is generous to the poor' (Prov. 14. 21).

'Christianity teacheth me that what I charitably give alive, I carry with me dead; and experience teacheth me that what I leave behind, I lose. I will carry that treasure with me by giving it, which the worldling loseth by keeping it; so, while his corpse shall carry nothing but a winding cloth to his grave, *I shall be richer under the earth than I was above it'*.

(Joseph Hall, *'Breathings of the Devout Soul, and Meditations and Vows'*, pages 51-52.)

Paul's 'thorn in the flesh'.

'A distressing, indeed humiliating, physical ailment which he feared at first might be a handicap to his effective ministry but which in fact, by giving his self-esteem a knock-out blow and keeping him constantly dependent on the divine enabling, proved to be a help, not a handicap ...

'His thrice-repeated prayer for the removal of the ailment was answered, not by his deliverance from it, but by his receiving the necessary grace to bear it – not simply to live with it but to be thankful for it. If his ministry was so effective despite this physical weakness, then the transcendent power was manifestly God's, not his own.

'Infirmities like this were welcomed ... if they were the condition on which the power of the risen Christ operated through him. They constantly reminded him not so much of his own inadequacy as of the total adequacy of Christ, in whom, when he was personally most weak, he knew himself to be most strong'.

(F. F. Bruce, *'Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free'*, page 136.)

'At home with the Lord' (2 Cor. 5. 8).

'Death is not an end; it is only a new beginning. *Death is not the master of the house; he is only the porter at the King's lodge, appointed to open the gate*, and let in the King's guests into the realms of eternal day'.

(John Henry Jowett, *'My Daily Meditation'*, page 283.)

Constrained.

'Forgiveness is the divine miracle of grace; it cost God the Cross of Jesus Christ before He could forgive sin and remain a holy God... When once you realize all that it cost God to forgive you, you will be held as in a vice, constrained by the love of God'.

(Oswald Chambers, *'My Utmost for His Highest'*, Devotion for November 20.)

'Patience' (ὑπομονή) in the New Testament.

'It is not the patience which can sit down and bow its head and let things descend upon it and passively endure until the storm is past ... It is the spirit which can bear things, not simply with resignation, but with blazing hope;

'it is not the spirit which sits statically enduring in the one place, but the spirit which bears things because it knows that these things are leading to a goal of glory ... neither the violence of man nor the powers of the evil one can injure it. *It is the quality which keeps a man on his feet with his face to the wind'*.

(William Barclay, *'New Testament Words'*, pages 144-145.)

'Meditate on these things' (1 Tim. 4. 15).

'Receive this counsel from me ... Remember that it is not hasty reading, but serious meditation on holy and heavenly truths, that makes them prove sweet and profitable to the soul.

'It is not the mere touching of the flower by the bee that gathers honey, but her abiding for a time on the flower that draws out the sweet.

'It is not he that reads most, but he that meditates most, that will prove to be the choicest, sweetest, wisest and strongest Christian'.

(Thomas Brooks, '*Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices: Word to the Reader*'.)

Preaching.

'One of the reasons for the disinterest in expository preaching is surely that so many attempts at it prove lifeless, dull, and even thoroughly boring. I never cease to be amazed by the ingenuity of those who are capable of taking the powerful, life-changing text of Scripture and *communicating it with all the passion of someone reading aloud from the Yellow Pages!*'

(Alistair Begg, '*Preaching for God's Glory*', page 22.)

(iii) Go on, smile.

1. William was walking down the street when he saw a young man doing some heavy manual labour on the side of a large house. The young man was moving a pile of bricks that had fallen.

'You look tired, son', William said. 'Have a rest for a moment and I'll give you a hand'.

'No thanks', the young man replied. 'My father wouldn't like that'.

'Now, come on', William continued. 'Everyone is entitled to a break. Come with me. We'll get you a drink of water'.

The young man protested that his father certainly wouldn't be happy about his doing that.

Losing patience a little, William said, 'Your father must be a real slave driver. Tell me where I can find him and I'll give him a piece of my mind!'

'You can give him whatever you like', the young man replied, '*just as soon as I get these bricks off him*'.

2. Young David asked his wealthy grandfather, Henry, how he had become so rich.

'Well, David', Henry said, 'It was like this. It was 1955, and I was down to my last five pence. I went to the local market and invested that five pence in a large apple. I spent the entire day polishing the apple and, at the end of the day, I sold the apple for ten pence.

'The next morning, I invested the ten pence in two large apples. I spent the entire day polishing them and I sold them at the end of the day for twenty pence. I continued with this system for a whole month.

'Then', Henry added, '*your grandmother's father died and left us five million pounds*'.