

Malcolm's Monday Musings : 26 September 2022

Greetings,

I need to explain the background to the contents of this week's 'Monday Musings' (below).

The fact is that I was struck by the following meditation for today (26th September) in Warren Wiersbe's daily devotional, published in 1986, '*A Time to be Renewed*':

'You were "born rich" when you trusted Christ. But this is not enough, for you must grow in your understanding of your riches if you are going to use them to the glory of God.

'Too many Christians have never carefully studied "the Bank Book" to find out the vast spiritual wealth that God has put in their account through Jesus Christ. Don't be a Christian who is only casually acquainted with "the Bank Book." ...

'Make it a point, beginning today, to read the entire Epistle of Ephesians. Underline the many gems you dig out and discover for yourself how rich you really are!'

[That meditation is entitled '*Study the Bank Book*' and is based largely on page 29 of Mr Wiersbe's book, '*Be Rich (Ephesians)*'.]

Prompted by Mr Wiersbe's meditation, I decided to devote this week's 'Monday Musings' (below) entirely to a selection of quotations from his writings.

Some of you at least will already be familiar with the name 'Warren Wiersbe' (in full, 'Warren Wendel Wiersbe'—the initials 'WWW' having no connection with the 'World Wide Web' 😊).

For any who might be strangers to the name 'Warren Wiersbe', here are a few biographical markers.

Mr Wiersbe was an American Bible teacher, conference speaker and prolific writer, his name being connected over different periods with Moody Church in Chicago and with the 'Back to the Bible' radio ministry.

Mr Wiersbe authored more than 150 books, of which, doubtless, his most famous consists of *the 'BE' series* of expositional commentaries, which covers from *Genesis* ['Be Basic (Genesis 1–11)' and 'Be Authentic (Genesis 12–50)'] to *Revelation* ['Be Victorious']. And I can tell you that *much 'sweetness' can be found in that particular 'hive of "BE"s'!*

Among many other fine qualities, Mr Wiersbe had a lively sense of humour. I cite just one example:

'I remember the Sunday morning at Moody Church when John the Baptist came in. This guy came in wearing a white robe and carrying a big pole and he said he was John the Baptist. We knew he was a fraud because he had a head!'

Clearly, his wife, Betty, shared his sense of humour. I have read that:

'In 1980 the Wiersbes moved to Lincoln, Nebraska, where he became Bible teacher at "Back to the Bible" Radio Ministries. In the course of the move, Mrs Wiersbe told the real estate agent, "We are looking for a library with a house attached". Their house would eventually have the entire basement devoted to Warren's collection of more than 10,000 books'.

(That 'collection' later grew to over 13,000 volumes!)

Warren Wiersbe was called home less than 3½ years ago (on 2nd May 2019), just a few weeks shy of his 90th birthday.

The set of 'Musings' for today is deliberately longer than in recent issues because (on account of a combination of family commitments and speaking engagements) **I shall not be adding to your inbox for the next two weeks.**

God willing, the 'Musings' will recommence on Monday, 17th October.

Meanwhile, I hope that you enjoy the quotations below. Here are a handful of 'tasters':

- (i) "Great is Thy faithfulness" isn't just a verse to quote (Lam. 3. 23) or a song to sing. It's a glorious truth to believe and to act upon, no matter how difficult the situation in life might be'.
- (ii) 'The battle Jesus fought on the cross against the powers of hell wasn't a minor skirmish; it was a major assault that ended in a complete victory for the Saviour'.
- (iii) 'The Good Shepherd died for the sheep and the Great Shepherd lives for the sheep'.

(iv) 'The baptism of [in] the Spirit means that I belong to Christ's body. The filling of the Spirit means that my body belongs to Christ'.

(v) 'It has been said that most people in our world are being "crucified between two thieves": the regrets of yesterday and the worries about tomorrow'.

(vi) 'Three phrases from Scripture have encouraged me: "Sit still" (Ruth 3. 18), "Stand still" (Exod. 14. 13), and "Be still" (Psa. 46. 10)'.

(vii) 'The will of God will never lead you where the grace of God can't keep you and the power of God can't use you'.

(viii) 'God always tests us to bring out the best; Satan tempts us to bring out the worst'.

Yours in our Lord Jesus,

Malcolm

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Selected quotations from the writings of Warren W. Wiersbe

GOD: HIS NATURE, ATTRIBUTES AND ACTIONS

'Know therefore that the Lord thy God, He is ... the faithful God' (Deut. 7. 9).

'No matter what our circumstances may be, we can trust God to be faithful. "Great is Thy faithfulness" isn't just a verse to quote (Lam. 3. 23) or a song to sing. It's a glorious truth to believe and to act upon, no matter how difficult the situation in life might be'.

(*'The Wiersbe Bible Commentary: Old Testament'*, page 742.)

'Casting all your care upon Him; for He cares for you' (1 Pet. 5. 7).

'How does God show His love and care for us when we give our cares to Him?

'I believe that He performs four wonderful ministries on our behalf:

(1) He gives us the courage to face our cares honestly and not run away (Isa. 41. 10);

(2) He gives us the wisdom to understand the situation (Jam. 1. 5);

(3) He gives us the strength to do what we must do (Phil. 4. 13); and

(4) He gives us the faith to trust Him to do the rest (Psa. 37. 5)'.

(*'Be Hopeful (1 Peter)'*, page 137.)

'The Father Himself loves you' (John 16. 27).

'God's love for His own is not a pampering love; it is a perfecting love. The fact that He loves us ... is no guarantee that we will be sheltered from the problems and pains of life. After all, the Father loves His Son: and yet the Father permitted His beloved Son to drink the cup of sorrow and experience the shame and pain of the Cross'.

(*'Be Alive (Gospel of John)'*, page 133.)

'In the day of my trouble ... who is so great a God as our God?' (Psa. 77. 2, 13).

'When you and I hurt deeply, what we really need is not an explanation from God but a revelation of God. We need to see how great God is; we need to recover our lost perspective on life.

'Things get out of proportion when we are suffering, and it takes a vision of something bigger than ourselves to get life's dimensions adjusted again'.

(*'When Life Falls Apart'*, page 51.)

THE LORD JESUS

'Through death He might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil' (Heb. 2. 14).

'In what sense did Satan have the power of death?

'The final authority of death is in the hands of our God (Deut. 32. 39; Matt. 10. 28; Rev. 1. 18). Satan can do only that which is permitted by God (Job 1. 12; 2. 6).

'But because Satan is the author of sin (John 8. 44), and sin brings death (Rom. 6. 23), in this sense Satan exercises power in the realm of death. Jesus called him a murderer (John 8. 44).

'Satan uses the fear of death as a terrible weapon to gain control over the lives of people. His kingdom is one of darkness and death (Col. 1. 13). We who trust in Jesus Christ have once and for all been delivered from Satan's authority and from the terrible fear of death. The death, burial, and resurrection of Christ have given us victory (1 Cor. 15. 55-58)!

(*'The Wiersbe Bible Commentary: New Testament'*, page 808.)

'Now will the ruler of this world be cast out' (John 12. 31).

"Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it [the cross]" (Col. 2. 15). The battle Jesus fought on the cross against the powers of hell wasn't a minor skirmish; it was a major assault that ended in a complete victory for the Saviour.

(*'The Cross of Jesus: How Christ Understood His Crucifixion'*, page 32.)

'Ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation' (Heb. 1. 14).

Angels are able to serve us, but they are not able to succour us in our times of temptation. Only Jesus Christ can do that'.

(*'The Wiersbe Bible Commentary: New Testament'*, page 808.)

'The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep' John 10. 11; 'the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep' (Heb. 13. 20).

'The **Good** Shepherd died for the sheep and the **Great** Shepherd lives for the sheep'.

(*'So That's What a Christian Is'*, page 34.)

'This man, after He had offered one sacrifice ... sat down on the right hand of God' (Heb. 10. 12).

'The fact that Jesus sat down after He ascended to the Father is proof that His work was completed. The ministry of the priests in the tabernacle and temple was never done and never different: they offered the same sacrifices day after day.

'This constant repetition was proof that their sacrifices did not take away sins. What tens of thousands of animal sacrifices could not accomplish, Jesus accomplished with one sacrifice forever!'

(*'The Wiersbe Bible Commentary: New Testament'*, page 832.)

Change.

'When we are **young**, change is a treat; but as we grow **older**, change becomes a threat. But when Jesus Christ is in control of your life, you need never fear change'.

(*'His Name is Wonderful'*, page 63.)

THE HOLY SPIRIT

'To one is given by the Spirit ...' (1 Cor. 12. 8).

'Gifts are not toys to play with. They are tools to build with. And if they are not used in love, they become weapons to fight with'.

(*'The Wiersbe Bible Commentary: New Testament'*, page 607.)

The Spirit: baptism and filling.

'The **baptism** of [in] the Spirit means that I belong to Christ's body. The **filling** of the Spirit means that my body belongs to Christ'.

(*'The Wiersbe Bible Commentary: New Testament'*, page 615.)

THE SCRIPTURES

'How do you read?' (Luke 10. 26).

'Blessed is the Bible student who comes to God's Word with an open mind, a loving heart, a submissive will, and a sensitive imagination'.

(*'Preaching and Teaching with Imagination'*, page 29.)

Bible superstition.

'I'm not one of those superstitious persons who seeks God's direction by opening my Bible just anywhere and pointing to a verse. But when the Spirit of God impresses me with a passage in the course of my regular Bible reading, I stop and pay attention'.

(*'On Being a Servant of God'*, page 37.)

TIME

Past, present and future.

(1) 'We must never forget the past. It would be tragic to have to relearn the alphabet or the multiplication tables each morning or how to drive a car or cook an egg. We don't live in the past, but if the past doesn't live in us, we are in serious trouble. The past is a rudder to guide us, not an anchor to hold us back.

'However, if we live only for the present, we will be controlled by "the tyranny of the immediate" and have no future. We learn from the past, we live and work in the present, but we are strongly motivated by the future'.

(*'Bless You: Receiving and Sharing the Blessings of the Lord'*, page 67.)

(2) 'It has been said that most people in our world are being "**crucified between two thieves**": the regrets of yesterday and the worries about tomorrow. That's why they can't enjoy today'.

(*'The Wiersbe Bible Commentary: Old Testament'*, page 18.)

(3) 'By faith, take off the graveclothes and bury the past. Leave it all in the tomb, and step out by faith into the wonderful freedom you have in Christ. This does not mean that God will obliterate the past, because He does want us to remember how He has led us and helped us (Deut. 8. 2). Rather, it means that you will be able to look at the past without fear and regret; you will be free from bondage to the past'.

(*'Jesus and Your Sorrows'*, page 77.)

(4) 'If we live only for the present and forget the future, then trials will make us bitter, not better. Job had the right outlook when he said, "But He knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23. 10)'.

(*'Be Mature (James)'*, page 23.)

CIRCUMSTANCES

'In all circumstances I have learned ... both to abound and to be in need' (Phil. 4. 12).

'God doesn't always change the circumstances, but He can change us to meet the circumstances'.

(*'Be Amazed (Minor Prophets)'*, Page 136.)

TRIALS

'Unto thee lift I up mine eyes' (Psa. 123. 1).

'If the outlook in your life is disturbing, try the uplook'.

(*'Prayer, Praise and Promises'*, page 328.)

'The sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed' (Rom. 8. 18).

'If you want to enjoy the rainbow, be prepared to endure the storm'.

(*'On Being a Servant of God'*, page 85.)

'That the proving of your faith ... be found to praise and glory and honour' (1 Pet. 1. 7).

'We must never mistake the process for the result ... there is suffering; but this is only the process. God isn't going to stop with the process; He wants to produce the final result.

'Suffering leads to glory; shame leads to honour; weakness leads to power. This is God's way of doing things'.

(*'The Bumps Are What You Climb On: Encouragement for Difficult Days'*, pages 47-48.)

'He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability' (1 Cor. 10. 13).

'When God permits His children to go through the furnace, He keeps His eye on the clock and His hand on the thermostat'.

(*'Be Hopeful (1 Peter)'*, page 24.)

SALVATION

'Saved through faith' (Eph. 2. 8).

Saving faith involves the mind, the emotions, and the will. With the mind we understand the truth of the gospel, and with the heart we feel conviction and the need to be saved. But it is only when we exercise the will and commit ourselves to Christ that the process is complete.

(*'The Wiersbe Bible Commentary: New Testament'*, page 662.)

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND CHARACTER

Contentment.

'Real contentment must come from within. You and I cannot change or control the world around us, but we can change and control the world within us'.

(*'The Bumps Are What You Climb On: Encouragement for Difficult Days'*, page 158.)

Patience.

'I confess that waiting is one of the most difficult things for me to do, whether it's waiting for a table at a restaurant or waiting for a delayed flight to take off. I'm an activist by nature, and I like to see things happen on time. Perhaps that's why the Lord has often arranged for me to wait.

'During those times, three phrases from Scripture have encouraged me: "Sit still" (Ruth 3. 18), "Stand still" (Exod. 14. 13), and "Be still" (Psa. 46. 10)'.

(*'The Wiersbe Bible Commentary: Old Testament'*, page 489.)

'Faith, hope and love' (1 Cor. 13. 13).

'These are the great Christian virtues that should characterize all believers. Faith looks up to a God who can be trusted. Hope looks ahead to a future that is bright with the glory of God. And, lest we grow selfish, love looks around and shares God's blessing with others'.

(*'Jesus and Your Sorrows'*, page 58.)

'Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord' (Rom. 12. 11).

'You have probably noticed that God often speaks to His people and calls them while they are busy doing their daily tasks. Both Moses and David were caring for sheep, and Gideon was threshing wheat. Peter and his partners were mending nets when Jesus called them. It is difficult to steer a car when the engine is not running'.

(*'The Bible Exposition Commentary, Volume 1'*, page 171.)

'Not as though I had already attained' (Phil. 3. 12).

'This is the statement of a great Christian who never permitted himself to be satisfied with his spiritual attainments. Obviously, Paul was satisfied with Jesus Christ (Phil. 3. 10), but he was not satisfied with his Christian life. A sanctified dissatisfaction is the first essential to progress in the Christian race'.

(*'The Wiersbe Bible Commentary: New Testament'*, page 647.)

'Fixing our eyes upon Jesus' (Heb. 12. 2).

I find that many people are miserable because they don't obey the admonition, "fixing our eyes on Jesus". They spend so much time looking at themselves, their circumstances, and other people that they fail to ... centre their attention on their Master.

'Instead of resting in His perfections, they focus on their own imperfections. Instead of seeing His spiritual riches, they complain about their bankruptcy. They go to church "to get their needs met", instead of going to church to worship the God who is greater than any need'.

(*'Be Committed (Ruth and Esther)'*, page 33.)

THE WILL OF GOD

'If anyone desires to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it is of God' (John 7. 17).

God does not give His counsel to the curious or the careless; He reveals His will to the concerned and the consecrated ... Unless we have a serious desire to know and to do the counsel of God, He will not reveal His will to us.

(*'His Name is Wonderful'*, page 39.)

Where the will of God leads.

'The will of God will never lead you where the grace of God can't keep you and the power of God can't use you'.

(*'The Wiersbe Bible Commentary: Old Testament'*, page 1447.)

THE DEVIL

A key difference between God testing and Satan tempting believers.

'When God called Abraham to live by faith, He tested him in order to increase his faith. God always tests us to bring out the best; Satan tempts us to bring out the worst'.

(*'Be Mature (James)'*, page 24.)

'Humble yourselves ... be vigilant' (1 Pet. 5. 6-8).

'Before we can stand before Satan [1 Pet. 5. 8-9], we must bow before God [1 Pet. 5. 6]. Peter resisted the Lord and ended up submitting to Satan [Luke 22. 31-34]'

('Be Hopeful (1 Peter)', page 140.)

MISCELLANEOUS

Rainbows.

'Three men in Scripture saw significant rainbows. Noah saw the rainbow after the storm [Gen. 9. 13-16] ... the prophet Ezekiel saw the rainbow in the midst of the storm [Ezek. 1. 28]... the Apostle John saw the rainbow before the storm of judgement broke loose [Rev. 4. 3]'

('Be Basic (Genesis)', pages 121-122.)

'The temple that Solomon built in Jerusalem' (1 Chron. 6. 10).

'If you were asked to name David's two greatest sins, you would probably reply, "His adultery with Bathsheba and his numbering of the people", and you would be right.

But out of those two great sins, God built a temple! Bathsheba gave birth to Solomon and God chose him to succeed David on the throne. On the property David purchased and on which he erected an altar, Solomon built the temple and dedicated it to the glory of God.

('The Wiersbe Bible Commentary: Old Testament', page 604.)

Worship, love and use.

'In this universe there is God, and there are people and things. We should worship God, love people, and use things. But if we start worshipping ourselves, we will ignore God and start loving things and using people'.

('Be Faithful (1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon)', page 166.)