

## Malcolm's Monday Musings : 21 August 2023

### (i) Scripture.

God our Saviour ... desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle—I am speaking the truth in Christ and not lying—a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

1 Timothy 2. 3-7 (*The New King James Version*)

### (ii) Food for thought.

#### **Foundational truths revealed to three Marys.**

(i) To *Mary of Nazareth* was revealed the truth of the Lord's *incarnation*, (Luke 1. 26-35).

(ii) To *Mary of Bethany* was revealed the truth of the Lord's *death and burial*, (John 12. 3-7 with Mark 14. 8).

(iii) To *Mary of Magdala* was revealed the truth of the Lord's *resurrection and ascension*, (John 20. 11-18).

#### **'All things are yours, whether ... life or death ... all are yours' (1 Cor. 3. 21-22).**

'There is an essential difference between the decease of the godly and the death of the ungodly. Death comes to the ungodly man as a penal infliction, but to the righteous as a summons to his Father's palace: to the sinner it is an execution, to the saint an undressing. Death to the wicked is the king of terrors [Job 18. 14]: death to the saint is the end of terrors, the commencement of glory ...

'Death is ours; it is set down in the list of our possessions among the "all things", and it follows life in the list as if it were an equal favour. No longer is it death to die. The name remains, but the thing itself is changed'.

(C. H. Spurgeon, 'Though He were Dead', Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, Volume 30, page 499.)

#### **'Why are you cast down, O my soul?' (Psa. 42. 5, 11; 43. 5).**

'There are various kinds of depression, to be sure, and some are the result of complex physical and psychological disorders. But there are times when we are spiritually depressed for no good reason.

'There are times when the best thing to do with our feelings is to challenge them: "Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God" (Psa. 42. 11)'.

(Derek Thomas, 'Rejoice', Evangel 11:3, Autumn 1993, page 70.)

#### **'Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night' (Matt. 26. 31; cf. v. 33).**

'Jesus himself and His commitment to the kingdom will become the scandal or "stumbling block" for the disciples. When they realize that following him does indeed mean the way of the cross they will flee from Him.

'Experiencing Jesus as a "scandal" or "stumbling block" has already been acknowledged in Matthew's Gospel. When messengers from John come inquiring about Jesus, He declares: "Blessed is the one who takes no offense at me" [literally, one who is not "scandalized in me"] (Matt. 11. 6). His own clan in Nazareth who were stunned by His mighty works also "took offense at him" (Matt. 13. 57). And Jesus' declaration that it is not what goes into someone that defiles them but what comes out of their heart causes the Pharisees to "take offense" (Matt. 15. 12).

'Throughout the Gospel, therefore, Jesus was a "scandal", causing offense and shattering the perspectives of those looking for another Messiah and another way. Now it was the turn of Jesus' own disciples to trip over the stumbling block'.

(D. Senior, 'The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew', Volume 1, pages 71–72).

#### **'As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good' (Gen. 50. 20).**

'It is the great support and solace of the saints in all the distresses that befall them here, that there is a wise Spirit sitting in all the wheels of motion, and governing the most eccentric creatures and their most pernicious designs to blessed and happy issues'.

(John Flavel, 'The Mystery of Providence', page 15.)

#### **The greatest heights and the greatest power.**

*'We are brought to the greatest heights* (for God hath "made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus", Eph. 2. 6), *by the greatest power* ("His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead", Eph. 1. 19-20).

(J. B. Stoney, *'Paul and the Mystery'*, accessed at ...  
[https://www.stempublishing.com/authors/various/Christ\\_Assembly.html#a14](https://www.stempublishing.com/authors/various/Christ_Assembly.html#a14).)

***'Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut' (Rev. 3. 8).***

'I could write a book on how the Lord has made a way for us without any conniving on my part. *I have seen doors open that I couldn't have pried loose with a crowbar*'.

(Vance Havner, *'Journey From Jugtown'*, accessed at <http://vancehavner.com/biography/>.)

***'Rejoice in the Lord always: again I say, Rejoice!' (Phil. 4. 4).***

"The person whose happiness depends on ideal circumstances is going to be miserable much of the time ... *here is the Apostle Paul in the worst of circumstances, writing a letter saturated with joy!*"

(Warren W. Wiersbe, *'Be Joyful: Philippians'*, page 16.)

***'The peace of God ... shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus' (Phil. 4. 7).***

*'What is God's peace? The unruffled serenity of the infinitely-happy God ... This shall possess your heart and mind'*.

(C. H. Surgeon, *'Prayer, the Cure of Care'*, a sermon preached at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, London on 12 January 1888.)

***'Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for Him' (Heb. 9. 28).***

'People often say, "I know that my sins were put away up to my conversion"; but Scripture never speaks in that way. When did Christ bear your sins? On the cross.

'Did He bear a part of your sins, or did He put them away up to the day of your conversion? No; if He bore one, *He bore them all when they were all future*, when you had committed none of them ...

'The value of His one offering, which put away all our sins, is for ever; therefore, He has nothing more to do throughout eternity with regard to the putting away of the sins of those that believe in His name'.

(R. F. Kingscote, *'The Advocacy of Christ'*, pages 6-7.)

***'To declare ... His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him who believes in Jesus' (Rom. 3. 26).***

'The perfect righteousness of God  
Is witnessed in the Saviour's blood;  
'Tis in the cross of Christ we trace  
His righteousness, yet wondrous grace.

'God could not pass the sinner by;  
Justice demands that he should die;  
*But in the cross of Christ we see  
How God can save, yet righteous be.*

'The judgment fell on Jesus' head;  
'Twas in His blood sin's debt was paid;  
*Stern justice can demand no more,  
And mercy can dispense her store.*

'The sinner who believes is free,  
Can say, "The Saviour died for me";  
Can point to the atoning blood  
And say, "This made my peace with God".

*Albert Midlane (1825-1919)*

***The humanity of the Lord Jesus.***

1. 'The truth respecting Christ's humanity must be (i) received with scriptural accuracy, (ii) held with spiritual energy, (iii) guarded with holy jealousy, and (iv) confessed with heavenly power. If we are wrong as to this, we cannot be right as to anything'.

(C. H. Mackintosh, *'Notes on the Book of Exodus'*, page 299.)

2. 'His human nature is as perfect as His divine nature, and *He unites Godhead and Manhood in one Person*. We cannot think of Him as a dual personality, and we should not yield to the temptation of saying that He did or said such-and-such as God, and did or said something else as man. Such distinctions may seem to be effective in preaching, but they represent the thin end of a very dangerous wedge ...

'The perfection of His godhead and manhood, on the one hand, and the unity of His person, on the other, can be best safeguarded by the classical Christian recognition of the two natures in one Person ...

We should indeed keep our Lord's incarnation and His virgin birth distinct in our minds. *His incarnation is the fact that He became man; His virgin birth is the means by which He became man*'.

(F. F. Bruce, 'Our Lord's Incarnation and Virgin Birth', Treasury of Bible Doctrine, Precious Seed Publications, pages 149-150.)

3. 'While His conception was supernatural, His birth was natural, and His growth afterwards was also natural ...

'He did not do some things as man, and other things as God. Certain things that He did reveal His humanity, such as when He hungered or was asleep. And certain things reveal His deity, such as the rebuking of the winds and the raising of Lazarus from the dead.

'The two natures were separate and distinct. They were not fused into one. He was one person with two inseparable natures'.

(J. M. Davies, 'The Perfect Mediator', Collected Writings, Volume 2, pages 191-196.)

### **'In Christ'.**

'With Paul the expression "in Christ" is found 164 times ... Of this blessed, life-penetrating secret, all his letters speak, each in its particular and especially prominent aspect. Thus:

in Romans — justification in Christ;

in Corinthians — sanctification in Christ;

in Galatians — freedom in Christ;

in Ephesians — oneness in Christ;

in Philippians — joy in Christ;

in Colossians — fulness in Christ;

in Thessalonians — glorification in Christ'.

(Eric Sauer, 'The Triumph of the Crucified', page 43,)

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

1. Young mother, Laura Parker, called her paediatrician in a panic. Dr Hutton's secretary answered the phone. 'I need to speak with the doctor urgently', Laura pleaded, 'It's an emergency. My baby has a temperature of 104F!'

As it happened, Dr Hutton overheard the phone conversation and mouthed to his secretary, '104F sounds incredibly high. Find out how the mother is taking the temperature'.

'Mrs Parker', the secretary duly reported, 'Dr Hutton says that a temperature of 104 is very, very high and he would like to know how you are taking it'.

'Thank the Doctor for asking', Laura replied, 'and assure him that, *although I am feeling a little panicky, I am holding up very well!*'

2. Sitting in his chambers, Judge Angus Campbell privately faced the opposing barristers in a court case.

'Gentlemen', he said, 'I am shocked to discover that I have been sent bribes by both of you'.

Both barristers squirmed uncomfortably.

Judge Campbell continued, 'You, barrister Craig, sent me £15,000. And you, barrister Hamilton, sent me £10,000. Gentlemen, let me make it clear that, in the interests of justice, I will not go along with this'.

Reaching into his gown, Judge Campbell produced a cheque and handed it to Mr Craig. 'I am returning £5,000 to you', he said, adding, '*As a man of principle, I will decide this case solely on its merits*'.