

Proclaiming the Gospel

Message
of
Jesus Christ

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness;
But unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1.18).

Edifying the Body of Christ (Eph. 4.10-16)

January, 2017

The Wise Still Seek Him

Vol. IX.01

I Will Gladly Bear the Markings . . .

I want a servant's heart

And I will gladly bear the markings
Of one held captive, yet free.
It's not my will, but Thine,
For Lord, in Your own time,
Only You can make a servant's heart.

Unknown

When those words are sung, oh! how I recall that great cloud of witnesses (Heb 11, 12): Zechariah, Isaiah, Job, Jeremiah, the eleven Disciples, Peter, Paul, Stephen, brothers and sisters all through the centuries, to include Perpetua, Felicitas, St. Polycarp, St. Ignatius of Antioch . . . Even today there are those who have been tortured for Jesus Christ, martyrs because of their great love for Him Who died on the Cross of Calvary, shed His **Blood** for your sins and my sins – and rose victoriously over sin, hell, and the grave (Jn 10.18; 6.38; Acts 8.32-33; 10.34-43).

But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men (Phi 2.7)

The words to the song, "A Servant's Heart," are soul searching.

The Lord appeared to Paul on the Damascus Road (Acts 9). The Lord put His word in Ananias to speak to Saul of Tarsus (Paul) following this. Ananias heard, as had many, "how much evil [Paul] hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem."

But the Lord said unto [Ananias], Go thy way: for [Paul] is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:

For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake (Acts 9.15, 16).

As those words come before us, surely we wonder, "just how strong am I?" Do you and I love the Lord Jesus Christ enough to lay down our lives for Him – if we are called to do so (Jn 15.13)? Read about Zechariah (II Chronicles 24.20-22), Stephen (Acts 7.54-60), and Paul (II Corinthians 11.21-28).

"I will gladly bear the markings of one held captive, yet free" are powerful words. Do we understand that though one is held captive, one can be free?

When we have repented of our sins and asked Jesus Christ to come into our lives to live, to be Lord and Savior of our lives, we are free in Him; we are free **NOT** to sin (Rom 6.18, 22; 8.2; 1 P 2.16), free in Jesus Christ, free to live a life of holiness

Hear Paul's heart:

That I may know [Him], and the power of [His] resurrection, and the fellowship of [His] sufferings, being made conformable unto [His] death;

If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead (Phi 3.10, 11).

What is in your heart? Do you want "A Servant's Heart"?

Will you gladly bear the markings of one held captive, yet free?

Do you honestly mean "I want the will of the Lord Jesus"?

Do you HAVE "A Servant's Heart"?

Do you WANT A Servant's Heart?

Mrs. Bettie L. Lowery, M.R.E., Deaconess The Rev. Mrs. Dr. C. S. Cole, Pastor, Ret.

Co-laborers together for Jesus Christ

Come apart and rest (Mark 6.31).

according to the Holy Bible. We are commanded to live a life of holiness (Lev 20.7; I P 1.15, 16).

Those who have gone before us as martyrs gave their lives willingly out of their love for God Almighty in Jesus Christ, the only Begotten Son of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Jn 15.13).

Do you recall some years ago the five men in Turkey who were martyred by heinous actions, who died horrendous deaths all because of their love for Jesus Christ? There are many others in our time who have been martyred for Jesus Christ (Acts 9.1, 2). The Church, Christ's Holy Church, has withstood such tests as well – and continues even today (Acts 8.1-3).

Are we not in the last days?

This is a time we need to have on the full armor of God at all times (Ep 6.10-18). We need to be ready moment by moment to live in the strength of the Lord Jesus Christ – to be prepared to fight the enemy (Jam 4.7; I P 5.8). The children of Israel were told to prepare victuals, for in three days they were to cross the Jordan to fight the enemy at Jericho . . . (Jos 1.11). They readied for war. We are in war against the enemy, Satan, who uses whom he will to go against the followers of Jesus Christ (Acts 5.29).

I am reminded of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (Daniel 3.17-18). They were willing to lay down their lives; they made it clear they would not bow down nor worship any other god but the only living God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel) – in Christ Jesus, the only Begotten Son of the Father.

I recall in the early 1980's how some *fine* "church-goers" in a University town gave forth words of joy that a building of worship for those with others gods was erected, and the children of the "church-goers" would now be able to learn about some of the religions of the world (II K 22.13) – though they, themselves, knew little of the Word of God in Christ Jesus! Are we not in the last days when such excitement is exercised in the name of wanting youth to know other gods? (Ex 20.3; 34.14; Dt 6.14; 11.16; 12.30; Jer 25.6; Mt 6.24)

John the Beloved was sent to the Isle of Patmos. Some are persecuted, but not unto death; some are imprisoned (Gen 39.30), reproached (I P 4.14), despised (I Co 4.10-13). Not everyone who has a servant's heart will face death by martyrdom. Read the Word of the Lord (Lk 12.11-53). (Jan 2015 *Message* "But If Not").

Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (II Tim 3.12).

Those who love the Lord Jesus Christ with their lives, as well as with words, have cried out from their heart, "I will gladly bear the markings of one held captive, yet free." Many through the ages have been persecuted and tortured physically. There are those whom history makes known their joy in these times.

There are those who have been persecuted with words, lies, a lying tongue by those who seek to set themselves above others as though they were "speaking forth truth," but . . . (I P 4.12-19).

People of God, these are hard days; these are days in which we need to search our hearts as did King David when he cried out,

Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:
And see if *[there be any]* wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting (Ps 139.23, 24).

I am reminded of the servants of the Lord God, even as they penned the Word of the Lord, who identified themselves as servants and/or are identified as servants: [John (Rev 1.1), Jude 1.1, II Peter 1.1, James 1.1, Epaphras (Col 4.12), Tychicus (Col 4.7), Paul and Timotheus (Phi 1.1), Moses (Num 12.7), Caleb (Num 14.24)]. There are many all through the Bible as well as those all through history, to include today, who have a servant's heart unto the Lord Jesus Christ. Many have suffered much for the Lord Jesus Christ and have done it willingly.

Secular music does not appeal to me, but there is one song that speaks profoundly as it does share the understanding of how insignificant we are and how little we are. It speaks profoundly concerning who we are in light of the whole of the universe as Job became aware in Chapter 38. "The Little Drummer Boy" says it well; we have "no gift to bring." We, like Isaiah in Chapter Six, have only to offer ourselves to serve Him, to serve Jesus Christ.

Perhaps, the only gift we can offer is "A Servant's Heart." If we have "A Servant's Heart," we will desire to serve Him and Him alone out of a heart of love for Him, for Jesus Christ. Is this not what Isaiah offered? Read Hebrews 11 carefully. Verses 37 and 38 are significant for our times as it has been all through the centuries.

They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword:
they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted,
tormented;
(Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and *[in]* mountains,
and *[in]* dens and caves of the earth.

History gives to us that Isaiah was one that was sawn asunder. Isaiah responded to the call of God, "Here am I, send me" (Isa 6.1-8). He had "A Servant's Heart" unto the Lord God and served the Lord to His death.

What about Paul who responded to the Lord God to serve Him (Ph 1.1)? The Word of God makes clear to us his sufferings; and, yet, with joy, Paul served the Lord to his death – as have many beyond knowing all through the centuries (II Cor 11.23-28). This is a day in which the true body of Christ needs to encourage one another in the Word of the Lord that we might be strengthened for these days that lie before us, that we might seek of the Lord to have "A Servant's Heart," in our daily life – as a way of life in Christ Jesus.