

Malcolm's Monday Musings : 4 October 2021.

Greetings.

This is my 'Monday Musings' email.

Today marks the anniversary of the death of Catherine Booth, the wife of 'General' William Booth, on the 4th of October 1890. Along with her husband, she was co-founder of The Salvation Army.

Here are quotations from two of the many papers written by Mrs Booth:

(i) 'The Gospel represents Jesus Christ, not as a system of truth to be received into the mind as I should receive a system of philosophy or astronomy, but it represents Him as a real, living, mighty Saviour, able to save me now'.

(Accessed at https://www.gospeltruth.net/booth/cath_booth/agressive_christianity/cbooth_4_assurance.htm.)

(ii) 'When your eyes are opened to the importance and sanctity of the divine law, your conscience will cry out for a sacrifice. Hence, no matter how advanced in holiness, every dying saint rests his soul on the blood of Christ ... And in all cases of the conversion of infidels or atheists, no matter how violent has been their opposition to the doctrine of a vicarious sacrifice, they are compelled to take refuge under the Cross, and in no other way can their consciences find rest or peace!

... God has not blinked the fact of your uttermost guilt. He has looked the subject all round, and met the whole case by letting His Son, the eternal Word, offer a sacrifice which heaven, earth, and hell pronounce to be enough!

(Accessed at https://www.gospeltruth.net/booth/cath_booth/life_and_death/cbooth_12_atonement.htm.)

Amen!

Yours in our Lord Jesus,

Malcolm

(i) Scripture.

The Lord God has given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him who is weary.

He awakens me morning by morning, He awakens my ear to hear as the learned. The Lord God has opened my ear; and I was not rebellious, nor did I turn away.

I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide my face from shame and spitting.

For the Lord God will help me; therefore I will not be disgraced; therefore I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I will not be ashamed.

He is near who justifies me; who shall contend with me?

Isaiah 50. 4-8a (*The New King James Version*)

(ii) Food for thought.

'He awakens me morning by morning ... The Lord God has opened my ear' (Isa. 50. 4-5).

'Nothing could be more beautiful than the attitude of the Lord Jesus as listening morning by morning with the opened ear ... to take instructions from His Father ere He went forth to fulfil the assiduous service of each recurring day!

Thus also may we understand what otherwise might seem inexplicable; namely, His reluctance or refusal to do at one time what He really does shortly afterwards, three instances of which in *John's gospel* will probably occur to the reader.

(i) In the *second chapter*, His mother, as they sit together at the marriage in Cana, says to Him significantly, "They have no wine". In His answer He affirms, "Mine hour is not yet come". But we seem to gather from the narrative that there was but a short break, a trifling pause, before He wrought the kindly miracle that manifested forth His glory.

(ii) In the *seventh chapter*, when His brethren suggest His going up to the great feast of tabernacles, "Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready", indicating ... that while they gave the rein to their own will, doing as they listed, He of the opened ear waited upon the will of Another. So, He abides in Galilee; but a day or two afterwards, probably to be in time for the closing day, which was the feast of ingathering, He goes up to Jerusalem; and what a message He is charged to convey! ...

(iii) In *John 11*, after receiving from the beloved sisters of Lazarus the pathetic message concerning the sickness which had invaded the home in Bethany, He abides two days still in the same place where He was. "Then after that" He gives the unexpected word to His disciples, "Let us go into Judea again". May we not say that, when the touching appeal from the sorrowing family reached Him, He had received no word from the Father ... Now, however, arises another thing. His disciples, in the timidity of unbelief, bring in their human fears, and would dissuade Him from returning to Judea; there is a lion in the way! [An allusion to Prov. 26. 13.]

How full of divine wisdom and of heavenly light is the ready reply with which He not only silenced their objections but banished their anxieties! "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walks in the day, he stumbles not, because he sees the light of this world, But if a man walk in the night, he stumbles, because there is no light in him." And thus, as He would not be induced by the precious, tender love of His human heart to move towards Judea until He had Jehovah's word in His ear, so on the other hand will He not be deterred from returning thither by any apprehensions of Jewish enmity or Satanic opposition. ...

He is unmoved (i) by His mother's suggestions, (ii) by His brethren's entreaties; and (iii) by His own heart's promptings; and equally is He unhindered by the dissuasions which emanate from His bosom disciples.

As the perfect Servant, in absolute submission of will and perfect self-surrender, He waits upon Jehovah's word and, having that, He treads the hitherto untrodden path of a perfectly obedient and dependant man.

He who was Jehovah's fellow [an allusion to Zech. 13. 7] gave Himself unto suffering and servitude, and hid not His face from shame and spitting. Precious, peerless Saviour!

(W.R.D., '*The Opened Ear*', *The Christian's Friend*, 1879, pages 248-251.)

The five widows mentioned in Luke's Gospel.

(i) The *thankful* widow: 'Anna ...was a widow of about fourscore and four years ... and, coming at that very hour, she gave thanks to the Lord' (Luke 2. 36-38).

(ii) The *destitute* widow: 'Elijah was sent to ... Zarephath ... to a woman who was a widow' (Luke 4. 26; cf. 1 Kings 17. 12).

(iii) The *sorrowful* widow: 'As He drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow ... and when the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep"' (Luke 7. 12-13).

(iv) The *persistent* widow: In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, "Give me justice against my adversary"' (Luke 18. 2-3).

(v) The *sacrificial* widow: 'He looked up, and saw ... a certain poor widow casting in two mites. And He said, "Of a truth I say unto you, that ... she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on"' (Luke 21. 1-4).

'His hands' in the Gospel of Luke.

(i) *Hands laid on to heal*: 'All they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them, and healed them' (Luke 4. 40); 'He laid His hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God' (Luke 13. 13).

(ii) *Hands held out to convince*: 'When He had said this, He showed them His hands' (Luke 24. 40).

(iii) *Hands lifted up to bless*: He led them out as far as to Bethany, and He lifted up His hands, and blessed them' (Luke 24. 50).

The Lord Jesus and the power of God.

'God's power was manifested in:

(i) our Lord's *conception and birth*. The angel Gabriel announced to Mary, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1. 35);

(ii) our Lord's *life and miracles*. Luke tells us that, "as he was teaching ... the power of the Lord was present to heal them" (Luke 5. 17), and, "they were all amazed at the mighty power of God ... they wondered everyone at all things which Jesus did" (Luke 9. 43);

(iii) our Lord's *death and gospel*. Concerning "the preaching of the cross", Paul said that "unto us which are saved it is the power of God. We preach Christ crucified ... unto them which are called ... Christ the power of God" (1 Cor. 1. 18-24);

(iv) our Lord's *resurrection and exaltation*. Paul spoke of the operation of God's "mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph. 1. 19-20).

And God's power will certainly be manifested in:

(v) our Lord's *future advent and kingdom*. The Lord Jesus said, "They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matt. 24. 30). The apostle John tells of "great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever" and adds that "the four and twenty elders ...

fell upon their faces ...saying, ...Thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned” (Rev. 11. 15-17)’

(‘*Day by Day: Christ Foreshadowed*’ (Precious Seed Publications), page 294.)

The Lord Jesus and the confession of demons.

‘Mark gives his readers an important interpretive clue in Mark 1. 34: “And He would not permit the demons to speak, *because they knew Him*” (italics added).

This assists his readers in understanding that the various confessions of the demons ...

(i) “I know who you are—the Holy One of God” (Mark 1. 24);

(ii) “What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?” (Mark 5. 7)

... and the Markan summary of the demons’ confession ...

(iii) “And whenever the unclean spirits saw Him, they fell down before Him and cried out, ‘You are the Son of God’. And He strictly ordered them not to make Him known” (Mark 3. 11–12)

... are to be believed as accurate confessions of who Jesus is, because the demons are reliable spokesmen reflecting the Markan point ... that Jesus is “the Christ, the Son of God” (Mark 1. 1).

(Robert H. Stein, ‘*A Basic Guide to Interpreting the Bible*’, page 96.)

‘Made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law’ (Gal. 4. 4-5).

‘The *law-maker* became the *law-keeper*, but then took our place and condemnation as though He were the *law-breaker*’.

(Sinclair Ferguson, ‘*Devoted to God: Blueprints for Sanctification*’, page 178.)

‘My hands and my feet’.

(i) Crucifixion: ‘They pierced my hands and my feet’ (Psa. 22. 16).

(ii) Resurrection: ‘Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself’ (Luke 24. 39).

‘Redeeming the time’ (Eph. 5. 16; Col. 4. 5).

‘Place a high value upon your time; be more careful of not losing it than you would of losing your money. Do not let

worthless recreations, idle talk, unprofitable company, or sleep rob you of your precious time. Be more careful to escape that person, action or course of life that would rob you of your time than you would be to escape thieves and robbers. And for the redeeming of time, especially see, not only that you be never idle, but also that you be doing the greatest good that you can do’.

(Richard Baxter, ‘*A Body of Practical Divinity and Cases of Conscience*’, Volume III, page 260.)

The Scriptures were written:

(i) For our instruction Rom. 15. 4.

(ii) For our sakes Rom. 4. 23; 1 Cor. 9. 10.

(iii) For our admonition 1 Cor. 10. 11

(iv) For our profit 2 Tim. 3. 16.

(v) For our holiness Psa. 119. 11

(vi) For our enlightenment Psa. 119. 105

(vii) For our enjoyment Psa. 119. 162; cf. Jer. 15. 16.

‘Meditate upon these things’ (1 Tim. 4. 15).

1. ‘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*’, pages 21-22.)

2. ‘I saw that the most important thing I had to do was to give myself to the reading of the Word of God and to meditation on it, that thus my heart might be comforted, encouraged, warned, reprov'd, instructed; and that thus, by means of the word of God, whilst meditating on it, my heart might be brought into experimental communion with the Lord.

I began therefore to meditate on the New Testament from the beginning, early in the morning’.

(George Müller, ‘*The Life of Trust: Being a Narrative of the Lord’s Dealings with George Müller*’, 1898, page 205.)

Blessings received ‘by faith’.

(i) Purification: ‘And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts *by faith*’ (Acts 15. 9).

(ii) Sanctification: ‘That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified *by faith* that is in me. (Acts 26. 18).

(iii) Life: ‘It is written, “The just shall live *by faith*”’ (Rom. 1. 17; cf. Gal. 3. 11; Heb. 10. 38).

(iv) Justification: ‘Therefore being justified *by faith*, we have peace with God’ (Rom. 5. 1; cf. Gal. 3. 24).

(v) Access: ‘By whom also we have access *by faith* into this grace wherein we stand’ (Rom. 5. 2).

(vi) **Steadfastness**: 'Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand' (2 Cor. 1. 24).

(vii) **Sonship**: 'You are all the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus' (Gal. 3. 26).

(viii) **Indwelling**: 'That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith' (Eph. 1. 17).

Faith and questions.

'Faith does not eliminate questions. But faith knows where to take them'.

(Elisabeth Elliot, 'A Chance to Die: The Life and Legacy of Amy Carmichael', page 117.

'Whatever is not of faith is sin' (Rom. 14. 23).

'Sandy was a thrifty Scot who objected to needless laundry expense, so when he wore a dress shirt to a banquet, he put it away carefully for future use. On one occasion when dressing for such an event, he took a used shirt out of the drawer and examined it with care, hoping to be able to wear it that evening. Not being quite sure of its strict cleanliness, he took it to a window, where he was looking it over under a better light than the room afforded. His wife, Jean, noticed him shaking his head as though fearful that it would not pass careful scrutiny.

"Remember, Sandy", she called to him, "If it's doubtful, it's dirty". That settled it. The shirt went into the discard and another—a fresh one—took its place.

Jean's words may well speak to every believer concerning things about which conscience raises any question whatsoever'.

(H. A. Ironside, 'Illustrations of Bible Truth', page 9.)

'God ... has not turned away my prayer' (Psa. 66. 20): Sir Walter Raleigh and Queen Elizabeth I.

Sir Walter's 'interest seems indeed to have been continually exerted in the service of others, and we are told that Elizabeth once said to him, alluding to the frequency of his requests, "When, Sir Walter, will you cease to be a beggar?" to which he answered, "When your Majesty shall cease to be beneficent"'.
(Edmund Lodge, 'Portraits of Illustrious Personages of Great Britain: Sir Walter Raleigh', volume 4, page 184.)

Evidences.

(i) The evidence of discipleship is abiding in Jesus' words (John 8. 31).

(ii) The evidence of love is obedience and sacrifice (John 14. 15; 1 John 3. 16).

(iii) The evidence of union with Christ is fruitfulness (John 15. 5).

(iv) The evidence of grace is a self-controlled, upright and godly life (Tit. 2. 11-12).

(v) The evidence of faith is works (James 2. 14-26).

(vi) The evidences of new birth are righteousness, love and faith (1 John 2. 29; 4. 7; 5. 1).

If such evidences were declared unlawful, would sufficient evidences be found in my life to convict me?

The difference made by changing a 'D' to an 'H'.

'Disappointment—His appointment',
Change one letter, then I see
That the thwarting of my purpose
Is God's better choice for me.

'Disappointment—His appointment',
Whose? The Lord's, who loves me best,
Understands and knows me fully,
Who my faith and love would test.

For, like loving, earthly parents,
He rejoices when He knows
That His child accepts unquestioned
All that from His wisdom flows.

Well He knows each broken purpose
Leads to fuller, deeper trust;
And the end of all His dealings
Proves our God is wise and just.

(Author uncertain. The poem is sometimes attributed to Edith Lillian Young or to Margaret Mauro.)

(iii) Go on, smile.

1. An old American farmer was sitting on his porch when a stranger walked up with a pad and pen in his hand.

"What can I do for you?" the old man politely asked. "You selling something?"

"No, sir, I can promise you that I'm not", the stranger answered, "I'm a Census Bureau officer".

"You're a what?" the puzzled old farmer queried.

"A Census Bureau officer", the stranger continued, "We're trying to find out how many people are in the United States".

"Well, you're wasting your time here", the old farmer responded, "*i've no idea*".

2. Five words to think about:

(i) 'The word "good" has many meanings. For example, if a man were to shoot his grandmother at a range of five hundred yards, I should call him a good shot, but not necessarily a good man', G. K. Chesterton.

(ii) 'The BBC has literally wiped the floor with the opposition', Lord Preston, '*Select Committee on BBC Charter review*', Minutes of Evidence, 20 July 2005. The mind boggles!

(iii) It is said that nothing is impossible; but there are lots of people doing nothing every day.

(iv) How do you explain 'counterclockwise' to a generation which has grown up with digital watches?

(v) Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana. [You may to think a little deeper about this one!]