

Scriptural Truths

E-Mail Newsletter

The Lord May Come . . . Perhaps Today . . . Behold, I Come Quickly . . . Rev. 22:7

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A New Year

At the beginning of a new year resolutions are made as one surveys the failures of a past year. There may have been hurts which go so deeply we wonder if one would ever be able to forgive the offender. For others there have been deep disappointments in people we expected more of. We have very possibly been the offender and wonder how could the offended ever forgive me. To me the beginning of a New Year is a time for “*forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ*” (*Phil. 3:13-14*). At times the hurt can be so deep that one asks “why did God let this happen to me”, and at times one may even get annoyed and angry at God for the ways things have turned out. How patient and gracious God is. When someone hurts us it is hard to forgive, but that which I find is even harder is to forgive to the extent that the matter never arises again. This is what God does for us for He says: “*Your sins and iniquities will I remember no more*” (*Heb. 8:12*). That is hard, it is not natural.

We must realize that when our confidence is in man there will be disappointments, and as the old hymn writer wrote: “There’s no disappointment in Jesus”, and He is the only one of whom this can be said.

There's no disappointment in Jesus, He's more than my tongue can tell;
His love is so sure and so steadfast, His friendship divine will not fail.

Chorus

*There's no disappointment in Jesus, He's all that He promised to be;
His love and His care comfort me everywhere; He is no disappointment to me.*

There's no disappointment in Jesus, Tho' sorrows may press me sore.
He comforts with tender compassion, His love cheers my heart evermore.

There's no disappointment in Jesus, He satisfies me alway;
So strong and so willing to help me, In Him I find comfort each day.

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Many years ago in a discussion, the question was asked: “What is your favorite verse in the Bible?” When it came to my turn I did not give a gospel verse, nor even one from the New Testament! My favorite verse was: “*He restoreth my soul*” (*Psa. 23:3*). The years have passed, experiences have come and gone, but this verse still brings comfort to my soul. I am deeply grateful to God that it does not say: “He will restore my soul once, or twice, or 50 or 1000 times”, but an unconditional promise: “He restoreth my soul”. I am just as grateful that it does not say “Repent and restore your soul”,

for when I am away from God I am in no condition to repent, nor indeed any interest in repenting! The entire work is a work of God in wondrous grace.

The Old Testament is filled with illustrations of God giving humanity a new beginning, a restoration.

- a) He did it with Adam and Eve in the garden.
- b) He gave the children of Israel a new beginning, a restoration:
 - i) With each new moon festival (2 Chron. 2:4)
 - ii) When they were redeemed out of Egypt (Ex. ch.12)
 - iii) On the Day of Atonement (Lev. ch. 3)
- c) He gave a new beginning, a restoration to individuals:
 - i) Jonah (Jon. 3:1)
 - ii) Elijah (1 Kgs. 19:4-7)
 - iii) David (1 Chron. 21:1-22:3)

It is one thing to have a heart, that despite the hurts, still feels sorrow for the individual that hurt. But a greater depth of spiritually is the one whose heart sorrows knowing that a dear one on earth is going to hurt. Look at the Lord as he spoke to Judas BEFORE his wicked deed (Jn. 13:29), or how He looked at Peter after his denial (Lk. 22:61). With what gentleness He spoke to Judas, so sympathetic that the disciples thought the Lord had told him to go and give something to the poor. Who can fail to see the pathos in the eyes of the Lord as He looked on Peter? I see Him as a Shepherd longing to take the wounded sheep in His arms and comfort him. That is how we are to be. How can I be like this, having this compassion?

The truth is I cannot, but the victory for it comes in a lovely verse: "*Christ liveth in me*" (Gal. 2:20). Consider an illustration: I have bad eyesight and from childhood days could never play a ball game. Can you imagine the sneers, the mockery, the sniggering laughs if I said I was entering the Masters Golf Tournament? However, if I had living in me Rory McIlroy, the worlds best this year, all his skill, finesse, and expertise alive in me, suddenly I would play as naturally I could never play. Why? Because another "liveth in me". This is the way to not only forgive, but also deliberately never to remember the hurts again.

What would be the results of this attitude?

- a) Individually:
 - i) I would be freed from the viper of spite, the jealousy within me, and the regurgitating feeding on past hurts.
 - ii) I would start to pray for the offender in sincerity and seek their blessing.
 - iii) When I am hurt again, I would seek to see what is causing such an attitude in the individual.
 - iv) I would not be so quick to judge people or situations.
 - v) I would ask the Lord to help me not to offend or hurt others.
- b) Ecclesiastically:
 - i) The saints would be liberated from unbiblical and anti biblical traditions.
 - ii) There would be a binding and beautifying of the saints.
 - iii) The world would see a love that is genuine, and the unity results in:
 - 1. "The world may know that Thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as Thou hast loved me" (Jn. 17:23, 21)

What a way to start the New Year, outliving the Christ life, for when all is said and done, spirituality is not:

- a) Speaking at conferences
- b) Being an elder or deacon, pastor or minister
- c) Using a certain Bible or a particular hymnbook
- d) Conforming to a particular voice when praying or speaking.

How does one determine spirituality?

- a) It is the likeness of the Vine producing His fruit. (Jn. 15:4)
- b) Let us never forget the scripture which says: "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. 3:16). It is only as God is manifest in the individual godliness and spirituality is manifested.

May God help us to live that life for His glory in 2013.

. . . . Rowan Jennings

THE NEW YEAR

Another year is dawning,
The old has passed away;
We hail the cloudless morning
Of God's eternal day.
And in our heart arises
The bright and morning star;
O day of sweet surprises,
We hail thee from afar.

Another year invites us
To fellowship with God;
Another time to ponder
Within His precious Word;
Once more to taste, like Mary,
His blessed sympathy,
Or know again like Peter
Forgiveness full and free.

Another year constrains us
To serve our absent Lord;
For soon the golden harvest
Will all have been secured;
When victor's crowns will gladden
The Blessed Saviour's heart,
Then in that great rejoicing,
We too would share a part.

Another year is dawning,
The old has passed away
We hail the glorious morning
Of God's unclouded day.
So let us serve and follow
Till faith and hope withdraw,
And love has full dominion
Henceforth forevermore.

... Mrs. J. M. Jones