



Today's Quick Word Psalm 34:1-3

By Bruce Christian

PSALM 34:1-3 *I will extol the LORD at all times; his praise will always be on my lips. My soul will boast in the LORD ; let the afflicted hear and rejoice. Glorify the LORD with me: let us exalt his name together.*

How it grieves us to read these beautiful words today in the jaws of the global Covid pandemic! Remember when we used to be able to comfort and encourage each other by exalting the Lord's name TOGETHER, by having his PRAISE ALWAYS on our LIPS in enthusiastic singing? How different that was from just looking at each other on a ZOOM screen and listening to other people sing heartily while we could only lip-sync being careful not to let any possibly-germ-laden breath escape from our mouths!

Perhaps there is an important lesson for us here. Perhaps we should take an inventory of all the things we just take for granted, and don't really appreciate how much they mean to us until they are taken away. Do we need to take more time to give hearty thanks to God: for the ready access we have to his inspired Word; for the sacrificial, selfless love of family and friends; for the safety and security of where we live; for the daily protection afforded by devoted emergency service workers?

As we plead earnestly in prayer for divine intervention to deal with the virus, let us resolve to take every opportunity to do what David vowed to do in today's verses as soon as our prayers are answered and the restrictions can be eased.

Today's Quick Word 1 Corinthians 2:6-8

By Bruce Christian

1 CORINTHIANS 2:6-8 *We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.*

Modern 'scientific' man prides himself in his 'mature' knowledge and 'wisdom'. In fact, he defines 'maturity' and 'wisdom' by how ideas match up with the discoveries he has made and the theories he has postulated!

This is the sort of thing that the Apostle Paul found himself up against two thousand years ago in Corinth. But there is a massive, fundamental problem with this way of thinking: if the man, Jesus, really WAS/IS the Second Person of the Trinity - God himself appearing in human form in the world he created - and Man, in his 'wisdom', nailed him to a cross, then this action demonstrated a significant lack of real wisdom. Paul knows he can't PROVE this within the framework of human 'wisdom', but he knows that a Day is coming when human 'wisdom' will be exposed, and found to be spectacularly WANTING.

When he was in Athens, he confidently proclaimed at the philosophers' meeting place (the Areopagus): "[God] has SET

a DAY when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has GIVEN PROOF of this TO ALL MEN by RAISING HIM FROM THE DEAD." (Acts 17:31)! Many of the 'wise philosophers' of Greece found this proposition quite laughable (cf Acts 17:32) because it had no place in their definition of 'wisdom', but that in no way changes the truth or stands in the way of the Sovereign Creator carrying out his declared Plan of Salvation, any more than the crucifying of his Son did.

Paul makes another important point in this letter: "The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned." (verse 14). Let us remain persistent in prayer for a real movement of the Holy Spirit throughout our world in these 'last days' - that people's minds will be opened, that human 'wisdom' will be exposed for what it is, that people will acknowledge the true wisdom of God that he has so graciously revealed in Jesus and the Scriptures, and that fewer people will be left devastated when the One God 'raised from the dead' appears in power and glory for every eye to see. "Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen." (Revelation 1:7).

Today's Quick Word Ezekiel 3:5-6

By Bruce Christian

EZEKIEL 3:5-6 *You are not being sent to a people of obscure speech and difficult language, but to the house of Israel - not to many peoples of obscure speech and difficult language, whose words you cannot understand. Surely if I had sent you to them, they would have listened to you..*

One of my Hebrew lecturers loved to quote these verses to us! We found his comment good for a laugh as we struggled with the script, the grammar and the vocabulary, as any one of these three was quite a challenge to us!

But, sadly, the point the LORD was making to his prophet was NOT intended as a source of amusement. The sad thing is that the message of God's saving grace is a very SIMPLE message. It doesn't need a whole lot of intelligence or learning to understand and take hold of - it only needs a humble, contrite heart. Some of the most faithful, 'fruit-bearing' Christians I know have had limited formal education.

The Apostle Paul puts it like this: "Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things - and the things that are not - to nullify the things that are, so that no-one may boast before him." (1 Corinthians 1:26-29).

Yes, the Gospel of God's saving grace runs right through

Scripture from the first chapter of Genesis, and it culminates in the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus, but people MISS it and are left without excuse on the Day of Judgement because of its simplicity.

It is the same with God's account of Creation that men have rejected in favour of a 'theory' that is becoming less and less plausible with the advance of scientific discovery! "The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities - his eternal power and divine nature - have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse." (Romans 1:18-20). This is also very sad.

If only we would 'swallow our pride', our feeling of self-sufficiency and our desire to be in control, and let God be God, listening humbly to his revealed truth. By doing this we discover that the Sovereign God of Creation, the God who so graciously reveals himself in the pages of the Bible, the God who came among us in the person of his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to SAVE us from our sin and ourselves, is the God who loves us, watches over us, and cares for us in ALL of life's struggles and challenges. Remember: "For God so loved the world that he GAVE his one and only Son, that WHOEVER believes in him shall not perish but HAS eternal life." (John 3:16).