

Wednesday, 15th July 2020



THE CANDLESTICK

... My people who are called by My name ... (II Chron. 7:14).

To belong to the Christian family is an unequalled inheritance. It is an indescribable privilege exceeding all human comprehension for there is no vocabulary to express the joy of knowing our sins forgiven, our peace with God, the true purpose to life, and our promise of an everlasting home in Glory.

No wonder, then, God is profoundly interested in His people on earth. His promise towards us is *certain*, I am with thee ... I am thy God ... I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness (Is. 41:10). His promise is also *consistent*, he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee. Furthermore, He is *compassionate*, he careth for you (I Peter 5:7) ... he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved (Ps. 55:22). And He knows all about the problems His people are facing for He has *covenanted*, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest (Ex. 33:14).

From the world's perspective though, God is unknowable, and because the world considers Him unknowable, He is relegated to the inconsequential, the unimportant, and the unnecessary. He holds no value, and if He exists at all, He is irrelevant! ... When they do feel a certain urge to render some measure of knowledge concerning Him, they don't go to His Word to find it. Instead, they consult with themselves to produce a form of godliness which denies Him so that the 'god' they construct is not the God of the Bible (Rom. 1:18ff.). They have no regard for His ways because their behaviour contradicts His instructions and they abandon His Gospel of truth. Therefore, since there is no fear of God before their eyes (Rom. 3:18), this godless and God-defying society dangles precariously on the 'cliff-edge'.

God will not allow such obstinacy to continue though for He works on the principle, whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap (Gal. 6:7). If we sow weeds, we shall most certainly reap weeds. Conversely, if we sow good seeds, we shall reap a harvest of abundance. ... But what if we sow *nothing*? The answer is simple ... we shall reap 'nothing'. We'll be like the man who dug a hole and buried the talent the master gave him (Mt. 25:18ff). It is sobering but perfectly reasonable that if we put nothing into the field, we shall take nothing out of it. ... As a small church fellowship, - totally dependent upon God for our existence and the future, - *what are we sowing?* ...

There are currently many concerns within the business sector about how small businesses will survive this pandemic ... but what about many churches? ... If the seeds of faithfulness to God are not being sowed, *nothing will grow.*, and that was the warning given to some of the churches in Rev. 2 and 3.

The world needs the Church because the world is hurting. It is in such a sad state for it does not know what way to turn. People's lives are in an endless cycle of hopelessness with no apparent answers. There is no reprieve from anything they hear from the politicians and the scientists, and no one is in control. Nothing is certain anymore, and they don't know where they are heading. Sadly, from a spiritual perspective, there is no evidence our secular society is returning to God ... and it is a taste of the future, as described in Rev. 16 where no matter how bad the worries and woes, they cursed God, instead of turning to Him.

And yet, God has a message in His Word for His people who are called by His name ... and it is a message we cannot afford to ignore, **II Chron. 7:14** If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face ... God's people ignore it at our peril. When God speaks to the unsaved, they cannot hear because their ears are blocked, but when He speaks to His own people, He *expects* them to be listening, and be willing to be obedient to His instructions. ... He has promised if His people would turn from their wicked ways, then He will hear from Heaven, He will forgive their sins, and He will heal their land. ... We can believe and trust implicitly what He says for He is not a man, that he should lie (Num. 23:19). ... He keeps His word, *no matter what!*

As we plan to recommence on this coming Lord's Day, how pleased our Heavenly Father would be to see us coming into His presence confidently trusting His promises to lift us out of the doldrums in which the world is floundering.

We know our meetings will be different for a while because we shall be required to observe certain stipulations for our own health and safety. However, the regulations do not negate anything about the glory and the pre-eminence of our God for He has never changed ... of that we are 100% sure! He has not been affected by the coronavirus, for He is as perfect and as pure as He has always been. He is untouchable by any blemish or defect.

Amazingly too, He has blessed His people, - whom He has called by His precious name, - with His grace, and through the blood of His only-begotten Son shed on Calvary, He cleanses us from all sin (I Jn. 1:7). And, with confidence, we know the same perfect cleansing blood will continue unabated as He purifies His precious Bride until that glorious day when He comes to this earth for her and then presents

her to His Father, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:27). ... *What a glorious day that will be!*

Far from being despondent, look to the great times ahead. Satan has fooled himself into thinking the Christians are defeated ... but *he* is the one Christ defeated irreparably at the cross, and he is terrified because he knows he will burn forever in the everlasting lake of fire of God's wrath! It is prepared for him and it won't be full until he is in it!

From the beginning of time, this world has known many kingdoms, - the British Empire has been one of them. There are superpowers today ... but they will all go the way of the rest for we can be confidently sure of this, that "crowns and thrones may perish, kingdoms rise and wane; but the Church of Jesus constant will remain. Gates of Hell can never against the Church prevail; *we have Christ's own promise, which can never fail*" ... And here is where we stand for we rejoice in this our rallying cry as we return to worship on this coming Lord's Day ...

My hope is built on nothing less
That Jesus' blood and righteousness ...
On Christ the solid Rock I stand.