

Rom. 14:19
So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.

John 8:32 And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.

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GOD IS GOOD

by Ken Green

"We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

One of the most foundational verses in all the Bible is **Habakkuk 2:4**: *"The just shall live by his faith."* Every step we take with God is a step of faith. Trusting Him; leaning upon Him; resting in Him; believing His promises. That's what the God life--the Christian life-- is all about. Faith is the way into it, and faith is the way through it.

Without faith it is impossible to please God (**Heb. 11:6**). Without this confident belief, we cannot live in victory or walk in the strength that God wants to give us. Without it, we don't experience comfort for our heartaches. Without faith, we don't ask and receive. How many things are lost in life because of a lack of belief? And how many things, with it, could be gained? So, why would anyone who wears the name of Christ not live by faith?

We all know and love **John 3:16**. It is a basic biblical verse for lost folks. But **Rom. 8:28** is such for us who have answered the call of Christ and are trying to follow in His steps. If you don't believe God is good, you will not be able to walk by faith. You'll live as though good things must be gotten some other way because God won't give them. You might even be tempted to think, God is not good.

But God assures us often in His word that He is good. A few examples: *"The Lord is good" (Nahum 1:7).* *"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good" (Psalm 136:1).* *"Why do you call me good? No one is good except God*

alone" (Mark 10:18).

Faith is believing the Word of God and acting upon it. Faith is doing this no matter how we feel, because God promises a good result. God is good. That word "good" means: kind, generous, benevolent. His intent toward His children is to hear them, bless them, help them, heal them. Even when we've made mistakes, perhaps disastrous mistakes, His disposition toward us as His sons and daughters is to work it all together for good.

I have seen the goodness of God take some of the truly foolish things I've done; even sinful things; things I deeply regret, and in His benevolence and kindness use them for my good.

The goodness of God is the soil that faith grows in. The fact that God is good is what motivates our belief when we can't see any other reason for going on. Faith is the foundational bedrock conviction that better days are ahead, that things are not going to end the way they are now.

And there's only one reason for having such a lofty, hopeful attitude: God is good. *"Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8).* That's how a Christian lives by faith.

LIVING IN THE PAST

Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? Does it not seem to you like nothing in comparison? But now take courage, Zerubbabel,' declares the Lord, 'take courage

also, Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and all you people of the land take courage,' declares the Lord, 'and work; for I am with you.' Declares the Lord of hosts” (Haggai 2:3,4 NASB). Were the inhabitants of Jerusalem able to remember the former glory of Solomon’s temple? Who among the survivors of the seventy years of captivity remained (43,360 Ezra 2:64); who could remember the glorious days of yesteryear? Evidently, some could recall those days. Did they also recall the catastrophic destruction of Nebuchadnezzar’s army as God’s house was destroyed?

Churches sometimes live in the past. Membership numbers decline: cherished friends move away; loved ones die. As we age, we might think of the battles, the struggles, the sacrifices, the defeats, and the victories that were formative to who we are now. Oh, for that glorious time when people wanted to hear God’s word preached. Oh, for that time when church members were known as “walking Bibles!” Are these natural and normal inclinations? If we have anything at all to think about, what would it be? The past! When the future arrives, it quickly becomes the past!

It is not wrong to cherish good times and even tough times. We can learn from the past. Yet, we must not let the past prevent forward movement. The Israelites standing before the Red Sea had only one real choice: Go forward! Soon, though, their faith waned, and they were wandering in circles in the desert. Gideon’s army was whittled down considerably: he still was victorious with only three hundred men (Judges 7). David not only had to fight the mighty giant; he faced the disdain of his own family. Can we see his rock sailing through the air and finding its target? Who can forget Elijah’s mental despair? His victory over Baal was great; still he wanted to die (1 Kings 19). And so, we remember the good times and we remember the troubled times.

The seven churches of Asia (Revelation two and three) were urged to think about their status before Christ. Do we live in troubled times? Yes! Remember, though, that these early Christians faced persecution from the government, paganism from the world, and a pervasive culture that celebrated every kind of perversion. Ephesus needed to recapture her first love. Smyrna needed to hang on to her faith even as they were slaughtered. Was the church in Sardis OK? No, it was dead. The laodiceans sickened the Lord. Every church needed to “hear with their ears” what the Lord said to them.

The timeless realities of life say that generations come and go, nations come and go and churches come

and go. But before we go, instead of wallowing in the past, let us remember that the Lord is still with us. He is with us just as He was with the people who returned from Babylon. Whatever the past may have been it was the past. Whatever the future is it will be because of the Lord. Rise and build!

Randy Harshbarger

CHRIST’S CHURCH AND SALVATION

Understanding the church of our Lord is vital to salvation since salvation comes to those in the church of our Lord. He died to purchase the church with His own life’s blood (Mat. 16:18; Acts 20:28). The greatest hindrance to people becoming members of the Lord’s church is failing to understand what **He** has said about the matter instead of hearing what the world desires and promulgates regularly. Listen to what Jesus has authorized as a pathway to membership in His church/body, thus salvation.

What is the connection between His death to purchase the church and His death for my sins (1 Cor. 15:3)? It is clearly revealed in Acts chapter 2 when those who *gladly received* the word Peter spoke, were baptized for the remission of sins and added to the church daily as the saved.

What is clear from scripture is that Jesus died and established His church/kingdom, one that would never be destroyed (Dan. 2:44). Those who become members of that church/kingdom are those who are saved by the blood of Christ (Rom. 5:9).

The most pertinent question then for you and me, is how can I be saved by the blood of Christ.

Jesus told His disciples, Mark 16:15, *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned.* Obviously faith in Christ that leads me to submit in baptism will lead to salvation. We have also noted that Peter told those on Pentecost in Acts 2 to *....repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins...”, vs. 38.* So, it was in response to the command Jesus had given His disciples that, they that received his word were baptized, 2:41. They were then added to the church, 2:47. Paul explains to the Romans a man must also confess with his mouth, Jesus as Lord in order to be saved (Rom. 10:9,10). All of these things are

responses on the part of one who believes Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (**John 3:16; Rom. 10:17**).

When our obedience to Christ is consummated in baptism, we are then brought in contact with His cleansing blood. This happens when our faith in Him leads us to this baptismal burial into His death (**Rom. 3:25; 6:4-6**).

At this point we have been bought with a price (**1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23**). That price being paid by Christ as He was sacrificed on the cross bearing our sins (**Isa. 53:5; Heb. 9:28**). He purchased the church/kingdom with His blood. The purchase of our souls was complete when we decided *...to obey from the heart that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered...* (**Rom. 6:17**).

Jim Stauffer

“A Man After My Own Heart”

William Jay Horsley

God, *“testified and said, ‘I have found David the son of Jesse, A man after My own heart, who will do all My will’”* (**Acts 13:22**). By this, David became a man of great and lasting influence. He left a legacy of cities (both Jerusalem, **2 Samuel 5:7** and Bethlehem. **Luke 2:11**), of generations of kings (**2 Chronicles 1:1; 34:1,2**) and ultimately the Messiah: Jesus, the son of David (**Matthew 21:9-11**). To this day David is one of the most popular names for our boys.

His legacy with God was a great blessing for Israel for generations to come: *“I will defend this city to save it for My own sake and for My servant David’s sake”* (**2 Samuel 5:7**) even in times of national unfaithfulness. *“Yet the Lord was not willing to destroy the house of David because of the covenant which He had made with David, and since He had promised to give a lamp to him and his sons forever”* (**2 Chronicles 21:7**).

He reflected the mind of God in his righteous indignation at the outrages of Goliath (**1 Samuel 17:24-30**), in his respect for God-ordained authorities (**1 Samuel 26:9-12**), in his humility (**2 Samuel 5:12**), and righteousness (**2 Samuel 8:15**). But maybe most strikingly and famously, in his confessions of sin when he erred. In his sins he confessed, *“But now, O Lord, please take away the iniquity of Thy servant, for I have acted very foolishly”* (**2 Samuel 24:10**) and *“I have sinned against the Lord”* (**2 Samuel 17:13**) Obedient, respectful, humble, confessing — examples for us in the ways of God.

~via Mulvane church of Christ; Mulvane, Kansas

Some quotes worth pondering . . .

"Nothing is as hard to do gracefully as getting down from your high horse."

"Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up." (**James 4:10**)

"It takes years to build up trust, but it takes only seconds to destroy it."

"You are responsible for what you do, no matter how you feel."

"You are in control of your attitude – you choose your attitude."

"Really great people do what has to be done, regardless of how they feel and regardless of the consequences."

"Never stop doing your best just because someone doesn't give you credit."

"It doesn't take strength to hold a grudge; it takes strength to let go of one."

"People who say it cannot be done should not interrupt those who are doing it."

"Though no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start now and make a brand new ending."

"It's hard to beat a person who never gives up."

"A second chance doesn't mean anything if you haven't learned from your first mistake."

Taken from Beacon Electronic Edition, Colledgevue church of Christ

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Call me, Jim Stauffer at 913-620-0563, Evangelist at the Lenexa church of Christ

We believe in worshiping and serving the Lord as He has instructed in His word.

Psa. 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

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Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

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What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10