

Grieved Hearts

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“He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were our faces from him. He was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.”
Isaiah 53:3-4

Ours is a time of ominous unrest and uncertainty, provoking the hearts of thinking men to distress. Too many are coldly accumulating wealth and position at the expense of others. It is surprising what some men will do now for just a little honor. If you are among those pursuing this world’s ephemeral pleasures, let me remind you that all such labor is in vain. The Lord Jesus is knocking at your heart’s door and pleading with you to cease this mad rush for temporal pleasure and false security. Jesus - and Jesus alone - is able to calm the fears that so easily oppress our

vulnerable human spirits. Jesus alone can fill your heart with a genuine, enduring peace.

If there ever was a time when we needed a Savior to bear our burdens, it is now. Even the most prudent leaders of the nations are distressed as never before concerning national security, puzzling diseases, natural disasters, and crime. Homicide and suicide are being committed in unprecedented numbers. Man has never been so thoroughly reminded of his mortality. Oh, my dear friend, are we not confronted daily by the “*distress of nations, with perplexity*” of which our Lord spoke concerning the last days? How clearly we can now see “*men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. For the powers of heaven,*” he went on to say, “*shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory*” (Lk. 21:25-28). Oh, how we long for Jesus, our Redeemer, to fulfill his promise to come again!

May I urge you, my reader, to be deeply concerned about your relationship with Christ. The prophecies of end-time events, one by one, are being fulfilled. If you hope to be “caught up” to meet Christ in the air, you must overcome the cares of this world; and we can do that only by heeding Peter’s wise exhortation to “*cast all your care upon him; for he careth for you*” (1Pet. 5:7).

Whether it be our physical infirmities, the loss of a loved one, a crushing disappointment, or even worry about the future, the Lord is touched by our frailty and is waiting for us to trust in his tender care. Jesus “*has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows*”. Indeed, God “put him to grief” for us. So, why face this sorrowful world alone? “*For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*” (Heb. 4:15-16). Our blessed Savior, though very glorious in power and majesty, is also “acquainted with” the grief of this life. He

has been here. How he must desire that we know that he understands and loves us!

While walking over the hills of Judea, healing the sick and afflicted, Jesus sounded the depths of every human experience. He knows what sorrow means. His grieving was not for himself, as we know, but for the sufferings and spiritual blindness of God’s people. It is heart-rending to picture the rejected Savior upon the Mount of Olives, weeping over Jerusalem, “*If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes.*”

Jesus suffered and died to purchase for us peace with God, a peace which will lift even the heaviest of our burdens. Nothing else can remove from our hearts the awful weight of sin. We are told that “*without shedding of blood [there] is no remission [of sin]*” (Heb. 9:22); therefore, our Lord had to pour out his precious blood to lift us from our sins and sorrows and to give us peace and comfort as we come to him. He knows our sorrows, and he is able and willing to bear the grief we so often carry. Will you let him bear yours this very minute? Why not surrender them just now?

Be honest with yourself, my reader. Are you really happy? If not, and if you desire real peace and joy, Jesus is now, even this very minute, saying with outstretched arms, “*Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*” This rest which Jesus has for you will remove your grief, give you joy, and set you free from this world of unrest and confusion, thus preparing you for that midnight cry which shall be sounded: “*Behold, the bridegroom cometh! Go ye out to meet him!*” (Mt. 25:6). Are you ready for this, my friend?

Undoubtedly, some will want to know what price God demands for this liberty from the sorrows of this world. I shall let God Himself answer this question, using His own words: “*If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from*

heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land” (2Chr. 7:14). When this is accomplished, we can truly say, “*he hath borne our griefs*”, and “*himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.*”

Because the shame associated with disobedience burdens many of God’s people, the life of faith sometimes appears dreary. Yet, the obedient children of God are the happiest people on earth, having learned that without Christ’s guidance, all life is frustratingly vain. Peter describes the faithful believer as rejoicing “*with joy unspeakable and full of glory*” (1Pet. 1:8). Such saints have every reason to be happy, for they know what Christ has given them and what he has taken away. He has given peace and has taken away sin, fearfulness, and that distressing sense of guilt. Thank God, he has led them out of darkness into light, out of grief into joy. They have been freed from the domination of sinful impulses. They have passed from the fear of death to the hope of everlasting life.

Faithful followers of Christ develop and increase their joy as they go to him in the time of need. They find their need supplied, as they lean upon him for strength in the moment of weakness, and find themselves upheld, as they turn to him in the hour of grief, and find peace and comfort. Who could keep from rejoicing with a Savior like this? The commandment to “*rejoice in the Lord always*” seems superfluous to every true believer, for he has experienced the reality of that oft-quoted verse, “*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee.*”

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