

“NEVERTHELESS GOD”

Author Unknown

“Our bodies had no rest, but we were troubled on every side. Outside were conflicts, inside were fears. Nevertheless God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us” (2nd Corinthians 7:5-6)

Here was this lonely servant of Christ, confronting his grim and desperate situation, wrestling with life. *“Without were fightings.”* This meant the assaults of paganism, the mailed fist of a totalitarian state battering at everything the church held dear, the threat of destruction and ruthless extermination hurled at the dreams and hopes of the saints of God.

“Within were fears.” That meant the man’s own consciousness of personal inadequacy, his aches of memory and gusts of shame, his sense of being the most appallingly earthy of earthen vessels, and the unworthiest of all the unworthy servants of the Lord. The man’s prospects, to all human outlook, were pitiful, his plight desperate and pathetic. He ought, by all rules, to have been a nervous wreck. He ought to have cried, “I’m beaten,” and given up the unequal struggle. He ought, humanly speaking, to have blown out the protesting light of his soul, in bitterness and disillusionment. He ought to have taken up his pen, written, “Without were fightings, within were fears, therefore hope died within me, and the dark night of unbelieving fatalism claimed me for its own.”

Of course he ought! But to this man in the darkest hour there had come one flash across the midnight; and here, in the light of that great vision, he springs to his feet, breathlessly flinging defiance at the menace of the facts, bluntly contradicting the logic of the natural with the thrust and invasion of the supernatural. *“Without were fightings, within were fears, nevertheless God!”* God comforted him. And so – magnificently – he sounds the trumpet of victory.

Can we rise to that final, decisive *“Nevertheless?”* God knows we are all of us needing it today. Without are fightings, principalities and powers setting themselves in battle array against the most sacred standards of life, doctrine of naked materialism and brute force laughing to scorn the spiritual values of the faith of Christ. And within are fears – fears of our own deficiency of inward resources, fears of a break in our faith when the real test comes, fears of the unknown

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REJECTED FOR WHAT HE SAID

Matt Miller

Jesus didn’t get whipped, spit upon, have his beard ripped out, crucified, and have a spear shoved through Him for feeding the hungry, healing the sick, and holding up hope. No one mocked Him for being socially concerned. In fact, He gained celebrity status for doing such things. He would have been on the front page of every newspaper.

Ultimately, He was rejected because of what He said. It was His message that got Him killed.

Christians don’t need to stop handing out water bottles and giving away clothes, but they eventually need to get around to speaking a very unpopular message – that, regardless of socio-economic status, every person is a wicked vile sinner in need of a Savior!

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future and the dim and menacing way. Can we, recognizing the fightings and the fears, fling these two shining words right in the wretched, glowering faces of them all: *“Nevertheless God?”* Darkness may cover the earth, and gross darkness the people – *“Nevertheless God!”* The powers of evil may cynically strike a pact together, as Herod and Pilate became friends on the day of Calvary – *“Nevertheless God!”* Faith may tremble at the assaults of devastating doubt, and heart and flesh may faint and fall – *“Nevertheless God!”* Can we rise triumphantly to that?

DON’T PUSH ME!

Aude McKee

One time I was urging a teenager to obey the gospel of Christ, and she said, **“Don’t push, me!”** A parent told me recently that every time she talked about religion to her daughter, she said, **“Don’t push, me!”** Sadly, many people have this attitude about becoming a Christian.

The next time someone says to me **“Don’t push, me!”** I will ask them pointedly if they intend to allow the devil to push them into eternal hell because that is exactly what they are doing by rejecting Christ.

**"WHAT MUST I DO
TO BE SAVED?"**

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"THE ASSEMBLING OF
OURSELVES TOGETHER"**

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

THURSDAY

Men's/Women's Studies

@ 6:30 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard

Belen, New Mexico

**"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN
ANY TRESPASS..."**

RESTORE SUCH A ONE"

GALATIANS 6:1

CONFESS TRESPASSES

James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 8:22

PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 8:22

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS

LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN

SETTINGS OF SILVER"

PROVERBS 25:11

"Quotes don't work unless you do."

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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LOUD & EARLY

Bryan Matthew Dockens

Occasionally, I accept online friend requests from preachers unknown to me personally who are laboring in remote parts of the world. Almost immediately, I get inundated with messages saying little more than "good morning" or "goodnight." Sometimes, the messages are lengthy reports on their work that would be better suited as posts on their own page, rather than private correspondence.

I feel bad about this, but... it irks me to get those messages. I wasn't quite able to articulate why until revisiting this proverb during a recent daily reading: "He who blesses his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it will be counted a curse to him" (Proverbs 27:14). By stating the obvious, Solomon made sense of my frustration for me.

Schedules are busy and I just don't have time for superfluous communication with strangers. Pausing to see multiple notifications on my phone that just don't merit a reply is not a fruitful way to spend time (cf. Nehemiah 6:3). General information can be shared publicly, but direct messages should be spared for personal communication. Greetings and checking in on folks is pleasant when it comes from friends we have established relationships with or people we meet face to face, but it can be awkward otherwise.

Greetings are meant to be good (Numbers 6:22-27), imparting blessings and peace. May they do just that, and not the opposite.

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