
We See Jesus

By David Wilkerson

April 5, 2010 Dearly Beloved:

I WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT DISCOURAGEMENT.

When we're hurting – when we are lonely, afraid, in pain or overwhelmed by circumstances beyond our control – we can quickly turn aside from our true source of peace and victory. Instead, we may look to human ways and resources. How tragic! We all know God is still on his throne waiting for us to call on him. And we know the answer to all our needs is to be found in God alone and being shut in with him. We even admit to our spiritual friends, "I know I need to pray. I know God has the answer. I know I need to cry it all out in his presence."

It is discouragement of the worst kind to give in to fear and despair while ignoring the majesty and faithfulness of our loving Father. God said to Israel, "I have talked with you from heaven... In all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee" (Exodus 20:22, 24). But Israel answered, "God hath forgotten to be merciful" (Psalm 10:11). "Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me" (Isaiah 49:14).

Are you a discouraged Christian? You are if you ignore the Lord's majestic promises and doubt that he means what he says. He promised, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me" (Isaiah 49:15-16).

You will be downcast if you go on carrying unnecessary burdens of guilt, fear, loneliness, anxiety and turmoil. Have you refused to rest on the Lord's great and precious promises? God is not mocking his children when he promises, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28). He is not lying when he promises, "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.... The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles" (Psalm 34:15, 17).

Let us not become impatient and act according to our feelings. When we get into trouble and cry out to God for mercy and help, all of heaven goes into motion on our behalf. Should the Lord let us see into the spiritual world to behold the good things he is preparing for those who call on him and trust him, it would be an incredible sight for our eyes.

Thank you for remembering our worldwide ministry to the poor, the needy, the widowed and fatherless, and especially to those in the recent catastrophe in Haiti. For information on these efforts and others go to: <http://www.worldchallenge.org/missions> .

God bless you.

In Christ,
DAVID WILKERSON

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Newsletter: We See Jesus

April 5, 2010 God tells us he has put everything created under the feet of man. Consider this passage from Hebrews:

“What are mere mortals that you should think about them, or a son of man that you should care for him? Yet you made them only a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor. You gave them authority over all things. Now when it says *all things*, it means nothing is left out. But we have not yet seen all things put under their authority!” (Hebrews 2:6-8, NLT).

This passage refers to everything having to do with mortal life on this earth. Simply put, everything having to do with daily living — such as agriculture, commerce, government, etc. — has been put to humankind’s charge.

The Psalmist refers to this when he writes: “Thou made him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passes through the paths of the seas” (Psalm 8:6-8). Some translations render the passage this way: “You gave them charge of everything you made on earth.”

Scholars say this Psalm primarily refers prophetically to Christ. Indeed, Jesus was made human and suffered in the flesh, though he was crowned with glory and honor. And Scripture does tell us the Father has put all things under his Son’s feet.

But the author of Hebrews here is referring specifically to mortal man as caretakers. So how do things today look under man’s authority?

You would be right to observe, “Surely things are not under authority right now.” What do we see in the world today? How do things look in our own society? Here is what we see: A broken government. Out-of-control schools. Confused leaders. Banking systems collapsing. Widespread unemployment. Unmanageable social programs. A complete breakdown of moral values.

This is all happening in the most developed and affluent nation in the world. Beloved, there is but one conclusion to draw from this: Man has totally lost control.

Think about it. Right now, the earth could be standing on the brink of a nuclear catastrophe. Iran is daring other nations to stop it from making nuclear bombs and missiles. It wants to wipe Israel completely out of existence. Iran’s government believes it must create chaos to bring their messiah to the earth.

In short, things seem to be spinning out of control, not coming under any authority. That’s why everywhere we turn we see fear and confusion. We all know that what we are seeing is a satanic flood out of hell. It is a flood causing men’s hearts to fail them for fear, as Christ predicted.

Hebrews 2:8 surely describes our day, a period when things are totally out of control. Yet, in the midst of all this chaos, here is what the author emphasizes in the very next verse: *“But we see Jesus”* (Hebrews 2:9).

It is incumbent on every Christian that in all our trials, afflictions and difficulties we see Jesus in everything. How can believers possibly stand firm and steadfast in times like these? The author of Hebrews answers us: *We must see Jesus in all that is happening in our lives.*

Some may wonder, “How could the Lord be in any of this? So many things in my life feel out of control and chaotic.” Let me give you three examples from Scripture. I’m talking about men whose worlds were turned upside down by chaos, shaking the very foundations of their faith. Yet in the midst of it all they *saw the Lord.*

Consider the apostles Stephen, John and Paul in their hours of great trial. Stephen was a man who stood unmoved as a mob of Christ-haters surrounded him armed with stones and ready to put him to death. Stephen knew he had only a matter of minutes to live — yet he was filled with peace and calm. What was the secret of this man’s endurance?

In that very moment, Stephen testified, “Behold, *I see Jesus...Son of man...standing on the right hand of God*” (Acts 7:56). He kept his eyes focused on Jesus alone. He could face a cruel death knowing Jesus was with him in it all.

I am convinced there is something of great importance in these examples for all who love and serve the Lord. It is this: When we truly see Jesus in the midst of our afflictions and hardships, we will always hear him tell us, *“Fear not!”*

So it was also with the John. In his later years, the faithful disciple John was exiled to the Isle of Patmos. This was in effect a punishment of solitary confinement. John had no human contact on Patmos except with his jailers. It was a time of extreme cold, hunger and excruciating isolation for this elderly servant. Yet in the midst of his trial John had a powerful vision of the Lord. He writes:

“When I saw him [Christ], I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not: I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and I have the keys of hell and of death” (Revelation 1:17-18).

Today I try to imagine being in John’s situation. It had to be a time of great confusion and questioning even for this godly man. In fact, I believe things could not have been worse for John. Yet the first words Jesus said to his anguished servant were, “Fear not.”

Even the apostle Paul knew this kind of desperate isolation. Yet in the midst of his own trials, Paul had a vision of Jesus standing beside him. Paul was able to declare in the midst of his persecution, “All men forsook me...but the Lord stood with me and gave me strength” (2 Timothy 4:16-17).

For Stephen, John and Paul, life's circumstances could not have been darker. Yet each of these men testified of seeing Jesus in their trials. Now, dear Christian, I have a question for you: *Do you see Jesus in your present situation?*

Are you able to say as these three men did, "Christ stands with me. He is giving me strength despite my circumstances"? I believe we are at a time in history when God's people need to rest in the truth that Jesus is always with us in every test, every dark hour. Is your trial a sickness of some kind? Unemployment? Fear of the future? I tell you, Jesus is there.

Paul wrote, "I have determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:2). Consider how Paul described his own times to his young associate Timothy: "We are in a war. We are soldiers, so do not get entangled in the affairs of this life... You cannot please Christ otherwise... Endure suffering!" (see 2 Timothy 2:3-4). In other words: "Timothy, do not get caught up in any cause — any transaction, any concern, anything — that could disrupt your focus on Christ."

Tell me, where do we see this demonstrated in Paul's life? First, Paul refused to get caught up in the theological arguments of his day.

He lived in a time when factions abounded on the left and right, and they fought bitterly. These parties were even willing to kill for their doctrines' sake.

Paul responded to the conflict by saying, "I have nothing to do with this. I am here for one purpose: to live and preach Christ crucified and risen. As a servant of the Lord, I refuse to get entangled in such affairs."

Paul was then compelled to write Timothy with the following warning: "The Holy Spirit tells us clearly that in the last days some will turn away from the true faith; they will follow deceptive spirits and teachings that come from demons. These people are hypocrites and liars, and their consciences are dead" (1 Timothy 4:1-2, NLT).

Paul's warning here is clear: "Men will appear preaching another gospel." The gospel offered by these charlatans will be a perversion of the true gospel of Christ. They will invent a new Jesus entirely.

Right now, a false Christ is being preached even in some evangelical churches. Theirs is a Christ who calls for no repentance. It is a Christ who embraces homosexuality and same-sex marriage. It is a Christ of acceptance of false religions, all supposedly in the name of tolerance and love.

In his own day, Paul responded to such perversions boldly, crying out, "I am shocked! What has happened to you in so short a time? I marvel that so many of you have become entangled in such a demonic gospel."

Paul took this issue so seriously he gave this instruction: “Even if an angel from heaven preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:8). This is the end result of losing focus on the Jesus that Paul preached.

Today the church we see is not as it should be. All things are not under authority. What is our response to this travesty? *We see the real Jesus* — the unchangeable Christ — standing victorious over it all! All other human, invented gospels will not offer one iota of comfort in the hour of need.

As Paul instructs, we can’t let even this kind of issue distract us. We are not to “be corrupted from the simplicity [devotion] that is in Christ” (2 Corinthians 11:3).

Paul also refused to become entangled in the bitter political battles of his day. At one point Paul was accused of leading a fanatic political sect. For this he was imprisoned and brought to trial before Governor Felix.

When Paul appeared in court he heard outlandish charges leveled against him: “This man is a political zealot. He’s a troublemaker, stirring up the Jewish population worldwide. He is a Nazarene cultist. And he is guilty of sedition! He is rousing great crowds against Rome.”

It was all a trap set by Paul’s opponents. Yet Paul saw an even bigger trap. Satan himself was trying to get Paul off his message of Jesus being central, and embroil him in the Jews’ bitter conflict with their Roman enemies.

As a skilled debater, Paul easily could have engaged his opponents. But he refused to become entangled in their political fight. He made that choice for the sake of the gospel he preached.

Eventually, Paul was taken before King Agrippa to defend himself. But in the royal court Paul chose to preach Christ. He boldly told Agrippa his dramatic story, even at his own peril: “King, I heard the Lord’s voice! He knocked me off my horse and told me his name. He said he was Jesus.”

The king was stirred by Paul’s message. And he refused to rule on the apostle, instead decreeing that Paul be sent to Rome to appear in Caesar’s court. During the night before Paul’s transfer, the Lord stood beside him and said, “Be of good cheer, Paul: for as you testified of me in Jerusalem, so must you bear witness of me” (Acts 23:11).

That was all the encouragement Paul needed. When he appeared before the highest political leader of the day, Paul would still stay on his message: “Jesus is Lord of all!”

Today Satan is attempting to get the church off its message of the centrality of Jesus Christ. Satan desires nothing more than to turn God’s people off their message. One way he does this is by riling up Christians over a political issue until it consumes them. When this happens, the issue soon becomes all one can talk about. Jesus is no longer the consuming concern.

There are issues that God's people must care about, but not to the extreme that opens the heart up to bitterness and unchristlike activity. We must be able to pray without a disturbed spirit.

Our Lord insists that we allow nothing to rob us of his rest. Indeed, he commands that we enter and stay in his rest: "God's promise of entering his rest still stands, so we ought to tremble with fear that some of you might fail to experience it" (Hebrews 4:1, NLT).

The testimony of Jesus Christ is that we can be in this world yet not of it. This means we don't take part in its spirit or pull. The fact is, this is how we become a testimony of hope in a world without any. When some anxious person asks us, we can answer in faith and confidence, "Jesus is my hope and peace."

Please do not mistake my meaning here: I am not making a political statement. Rather, I am warning Christians about getting entangled in the growing bitterness of today's politics. Paul saw the pitfalls of it and so should we.

Jesus has to remain central in our hearts, minds and doings, not policies or politicians. Though those things are important, they can rob us of our central concern, the gospel of Christ. Our confidence as Christians is that we know all nations will come under the authority of our Lord Jesus.

All around us the world is breaking down. *But we see Jesus!* We see him in all our present trials. We see him standing with us in our pain, our suffering, our crises, all things.

Most of all, we see Jesus getting all things ready for his coming. Hallelujah!

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