



Box 151, Strathalbyn, SA 5255

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## LET DOWN THE NETS!

*"Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for the draught." Luke 5:4*

We learn from this narrative, the necessity of human agency. The draught of fishes was miraculous, yet neither the fisherman nor his boat, nor his fishing tackle were ignored; but all were used to take the fishes. So in the saving of souls, God worketh by means; and while the present economy of grace shall stand, God will be pleased by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

When God worketh without instruments, doubtless He is glorified; but He hath Himself selected the plan of instrumentality as being that by which He is most magnified in the earth. Means of themselves are utterly unavailing.

"Master, we have toiled all the night and have taken nothing." What was the reason of this? Were they not fishermen plying their special calling? Verily, they were no raw hands; they understood the work. Had they gone about the toil unskillfully? No. Had they lacked industry? No, they had toiled. Had they lacked perseverance? No, they had toiled all the night. Was there a deficiency of fish in the sea? Certainly not, for as soon as the Master came, they swam to the net in shoals.

## NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

Greetings in the name of our dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Keep looking up to the One who alone can lift us up from the miry clay and set our feet upon a rock.

I include these selections trusting that they will be a blessing to you. I would like to thank those who have passed on quotes or articles. I continue to encourage each of you to either write an article, or just pass on something you have enjoyed reading – I am sure it will be a blessing to others also.

Joshua

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What, then, is the reason? Is it because there is no power in the means of themselves apart from the presence of Jesus? "Without Him we can do nothing." But with Christ we can do all things. Christ's presence confers success. Jesus sat in Peter's boat, and His will, by a mysterious influence, drew the fish to the net.

When Jesus is lifted up in His Church, His presence is the Church's power — the shout of a king is in the midst of her. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." Let us go out this morning on our work of soul fishing, looking up in faith, and around us in solemn anxiety. Let us toil till night comes, and we shall not labour in vain, for He who bids us let down the net, will fill it with fishes.

By C.H. Spurgeon – from "Morning by Morning" – Oct 8

### Free Subscription

Send Name and Address to:

Joshua McPherson

Box 151

Strathalbyn SA, 5255

Or six\_mac@bigpond.com

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The editor of Higher Ground is Joshua McPherson. He is a young man who desires to walk closer to the Lord each day, and encourages others to do the same.

## BUILDING OR WRECKING

10 Little Christians, standing in a line,  
 One disliked the pastor, then there were nine.  
 9 little Christians stayed up very late,  
 One slept too late on Sunday, then there were eight.  
 8 little Christians on their way to Heaven,  
 One took the low road, then there were seven.  
 7 little Christians chirping like some chicks,  
 One disliked the music, then there were six.  
 6 little Christians seemed very much alive,  
 but one lost his interest then there were five.  
 5 little Christians pulling for heaven's shore,  
 but one stopped to rest, then there were only four.  
 4 little Christians, each busy as a bee  
 One got her feelings hurt, then there were three.  
 3 little Christians knew not what to do,  
 One joined the sporting crowd, then there were two.

2 little Christians, our rhyme is nearly done,  
 differed with each other, then there was one.

*... The greatest profits are cumulative*

1 little Christian, can't do much 'tis true;  
 brought his friend to Bible study-then there were two.  
 2 earnest Christians, each won one more,  
 that doubled the number, then there were four.  
 4 sincere Christians worked early and worked late,  
 Each won another, then there were eight.  
 8 splendid Christians, if they doubled as before,  
 In just a few short weeks, we'd have 1,024.  
 In this little jingle, there is a lesson true,  
 You either belong to The Building Crew,  
 Or to the wrecking crew! -author unknown-

## 21ST CENTURY BEREANS

*"These were more noble ... in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Acts 17:11*

The Bereans are commended for having more noble character than those in Thessalonica, where Paul and Silas had just escaped a rioting mob who reacted angrily against the gospel that had been preached to them. Why were the Bereans deserving of such commendation? We are given three reasons in this verse:

1) They received the Word (cross reference: 1 Thessalonians 2:13, "... when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God..."). If the Bible is to be the foundation of what I believe, think, and do, then I must too receive it as the Word of God to me personally and specifically. It can be argued from a logical approach that the Bible is the Word of God, but stronger than the weight of apologetics is the fact that Jesus believed it to be the Word of God.

**"You don't need to see the way if you stay close to the One who does"**

*Our Daily Bread*

2) Their attitude was one of readiness of mind. This suggests a teachable approach rather than a critical approach; they were prepared to obey and follow God's Word and welcomed its authority on their lives. One way I can approach God's Word with the right attitude is to come humbly, ready for God to speak to me, like Samuel ("Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth", 1 Samuel 3:10).

3) They searched the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so. By searching the Scriptures, we can get proper context and balance, and the Holy Spirit will give us convictions, it won't be just accepting human teaching or following what other people believe. The Scriptures are God's divinely inspired Word, and thus He will speak to us as we search them with the right attitude. In contrast to this, the Pharisees made the Word of God to be ineffective by imposing their own ideas and interpretations of the Scripture on others, so that people's lives were governed by legalistic tradition (Mark 7:13). We too can allow tradition or our own preconceptions and biases to "colour" our understanding or interpretation of God's Word, but He wants us to "rightly divide the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

The challenge for each of us is: Are we 21st Century Bereans?

By A. Budimir

## WATCH THEREFORE

*“for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.” Matthew 25:13*

In this parable, there are a number of valuable insights. First, we have the bridegroom. This is a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will come again soon.

Notice the bridegroom comes at midnight. We may take comfort in the fact that it is when things seem darkest; when the world seems to be at its worst, then Jesus will come!

It is also interesting to notice that someone had told the 10 virgins that he was coming, and that they should prepare their lamps. Are we those who warn people around us of Christ's coming, and the need to prepare?

Finally we come to the virgins. These were the ones who knew of the impending wedding, and had gone out with good intentions to meet the bridegroom. Each had taken her lamp, but while the bridegroom tarried each slumbered and slept.

Consider the fact that while they slept their lamps went out. How true this is in our lives! If we do not put effort into our Christian walk, our lamps will go out—our witness for Christ will be dimmed, or even nonexistent. (see James 2:17)

Praise God that five of these virgins were wise enough to see that their effort would not be enough—they would run out of oil! For this reason they took more oil in their vessels. When their lamps went out, all they needed to do was go to that vessel, and refill their lamps. Their lamps could then burn brightly once again. These were the ones who went in with the bridegroom to the wedding.

On the other hand, Christ gives us the picture of five virgins who were foolish. They did not take a vessel of oil with them, so when their lamp went out, they had no way of refilling it. They had to return to ‘them that sell’ and ‘buy for (them)selves’. By the time they had managed to get some light happening, they were late. They cried out to the bridegroom to let them in, but he said ‘I know you not’.

What was the difference between these two groups of virgins? The wise had resources to draw upon, while the foolish had none. What then was this resource upon which the wise could so easily draw upon?

The Spirit of God, who is pictured as the oil, was present with the wise virgins, because they knew they would need Him. They knew they would run out of their own strength and resources, and therefore they needed the Spirit of God.

The foolish saw no need of this additional burden. They were like many today, who turn out to be short-term Christians. They want to prepare for Christ's coming, and they even make some sort of commitment to Him and His cause. Sadly, sooner or later like all of us, they slumber, then awake to the fact that their light

has gone out.

It is only then that it becomes clear that they never truly knew Christ, for they do not have the Spirit of God (Romans 8:9), and thus they do not have the resources to draw upon in this time of need.

These are those who one day will come to Christ and ask to be let in, but Christ will be required to say ‘I know you not’. How disappointing to have waited, to have thought you would be taken in with the ones who knew Christ, to have tried to walk according to what is taught by the church from the Word of God, and then to be left out, and unknown!

It may seem harsh to say that there are those in Christian circles who think they have salvation in Christ, but who will one day be found wanting, but it is sadly true.

Think for a moment of the parable of the wheat and tares—all look good, but one is true, and one false, not to be parted until the judgment day.

Again, we have Christ's parable of the sower. Some seed falls on rocky ground, springs up (looks good!), and then withers away. Christ himself describes this as ‘they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy, and these have no root’.

Again, Christ tells the parable of the man who builds his lovely house upon the sand, then the rain and floods come, and the house falls.

In each of these we see a non-genuine, rootless, foundationless Christian. In each we see something that looks good, but that comes to nothing. Surely we would say that there is a very real danger of an outward profession of faith, but one that is not genuine and true, and one that therefore cannot stand.

Take heed to our Lord's conclusion of this passage ‘watch therefore...’

I believe that Christ referred here, not to a casual watching for Christ to come, but to keeping a watch upon ourselves, lest we be not ready when he comes.

Remember the problem was not just in the watching, but in the preparation *for watching* by the virgins.

May I challenge you to look deeply at your own heart? Has Christ indeed saved you? Or have you made a profession of faith, and upon closer examination you have to say you have no root, or foundation? Perhaps you have not even made a profession of faith. Whatever the case, don't delay—get right with God!

Joshua

### WHEN YOUR HUT IS ON FIRE...

*"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God..." Rom 8:28*

The only survivor of a shipwreck was washed up on a small, uninhabited island. He prayed feverishly for God to rescue him. Every day he scanned the horizon for help, but none seemed forthcoming. Exhausted, he eventually managed to build a little hut out of driftwood to protect himself from the elements, and to store his few possessions.

One day, after scavenging for food, he arrived home to find his little hut in flames, with smoke rolling up to the sky. He felt the worst had happened, and everything was lost. He was stunned with disbelief, grief, and anger. He cried out, "God! How could you do this to me?"

Early the next day, he was awakened by the sound of a ship approaching the island!

It had come to rescue him! "How did you know I was here?" asked the weary man of his rescuers. "We saw your smoke signal," they replied.

The Moral of This Story: It's easy to get discouraged when things are going bad, but we shouldn't lose heart, because God is at work in our lives, even in the midst of our pain and suffering. Remember that the next time your little hut seems to be burning to the ground. It just may be a smoke signal that summons the Grace of God.

### JUST A THOUGHT

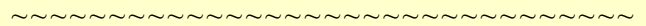
*"Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ"*

The verse quoted above is Paul's greeting to the Philippians (1:2). Notice the depth of meaning that it contains.

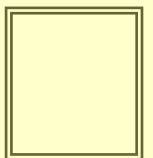
On the other hand, have you ever considered how standard *our* greetings are? How often we meet someone, and the first thing we say is "how are you". Frequently we have no real interest in how the person is—that it is just what we always say. Imagine if you asked someone how they were, and instead of the usual answer they said "oh, my cold is getting better, but the arthritis has gone into my knees now; I am having trouble reading (guess my eyes are getting bad), the dentist tells me I need three new fillings..." What a shock!

Can we take this to a spiritual level? How much interest do we take in the spiritual walk of those to whom we speak? Are we genuinely interested in seeing them walk closer to Christ? Perhaps our greetings could reflect that more....

Joshua



Higher Ground  
Box 151  
Strathalbyn, SA 5255



To:

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