

The Lakeview Lamp

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” - Psalm 119:105

June 10, 2007

Going Through the Motions

Mitchell Stevens

“My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; it is melted within me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaves to my jaws; and Thou dost lay me in the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded me; a band of evildoers has encompassed me; they pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me; they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.” – Psalm 22:1, 14-18

It is difficult to grasp how such words can be applied to Jesus Christ, the One through whom all things came into being (**John 1:3**). The wonder for me is not so much with how the Faithful Witness and Final Judge could choose to undergo the humiliation of betrayal and injustice, but with how the Creator could consciously choose to undergo the severest of physical agonies. The basest of human impulses is physical self-preservation. Satan understands this very well. “*Skin for skin!*” he once said, “*Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life.*” Touch his bone and his flesh; he will curse God to His face (**Job 2:4-5**). Or, as in Job’s case, he will at least begin to have some serious doubts.

During His ministry on Earth, Christ demonstrated on multiple occasions His mastery over the human nervous system. He was able with a word to cure leprosy, a disease that destroys the nervous system (**Lk. 5:12-13, 17:12f**). The act of “cleansing” a leper was in itself an act of creation – re-creating flesh, nerves, and muscle. By the power of Christ, the blind received sight, the deaf gained hearing, the lame walked, lepers were cleansed, and the dead were raised (**Mt. 11:5**). If Jesus could restore a body to such functions,

could He not also, in the midst of severe torture, have suspended them in His own?

He could have received the scourge, borne the cross, and endured the crucifixion without a twinge of pain. He might have washed out the mocking faces and muted the jeers and taunts. He could have performed the work of sacrifice, gone through all the necessary motions for the sake of prophecy and atonement...and never felt a thing.

However, had He only gone through the motions, would His sacrifice have meant what it ultimately did? Not according to the inspired reflections on what Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection accomplished. Hebrews tells us that He was crowned with glory and honor *"because of the suffering of death."* *"For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings"* (**Heb. 2:9-10**). No, it is quite important that He endured every physical and spiritual aspect of the sentence.

It is certainly hard to fathom the Creator feeling physical and mental anguish. But that's part of the whole point, isn't it? Should the depth of God's saving grace not overwhelm me? Such a response is only appropriate. Such awe should only increase with the amount of time and the number of occasions I center my mind upon it. Let us consider this in our weekly Christian service of worship. If I go through the motions of eating the bread and drinking the cup, if I hollowly sing the words of a song, bow my head and say the Amen to the prayers, but never feel a thing, is it an effective offering? Certainly not! As it was necessary for my Lord to feel His suffering, so is it necessary that I feel their effect on me. *"For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he does not judge the body rightly"* (**1 Cor. 11:26-29**).

Rather than going through the motions, let us be fully engaged in performing the work of God, so that we may join our great Forerunner in being crowned with glory and honor.



Right is right even if nobody does it, and wrong is wrong even if everybody does it.

Children follow your example more than they follow your advice.

Is prayer your spare tire or your steering wheel?

"Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth; break forth in song, rejoice, and sing praises." – **Psalm 98:4**

Family News

Virginia Bryant had an accident in her car this past week but was not injured.

Mary Burnett had a bad day yesterday.

Elmo Ferrell remains at NHC, room 112, for rehab and is doing better.

Estelle Hayes has not been feeling well but plans on being here today.

Bruce Jones, Karen Moore's dad, continues to improve.

Laura Moore married Chad Lynn yesterday. She will be moving to WV this week.

Lyda Plank is having some tests done on Tuesday and requests prayers.

Cotton Read is some better this week.

Jessica Stubblefield will turn 17 tomorrow.

Ame White suffered two falls this past week and is bruised on both sides of her body.

Bill White has excessive calcium buildup in his arteries and is having a stress test on Tuesday.

Robert Wray got a good report at the eye doctor this past week.

New Reports: **Arrigo Corazza, Allen Malone.**

Out of town, traveling, or visiting: **Boyd's** (all week at Hilton Head), **Johnson's** (family reunion), **Brian Neighbours** (FL to get Zach), **Jennifer Nicholson and kids** (AL)

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*"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks" (1
Thes 5:16-18).*