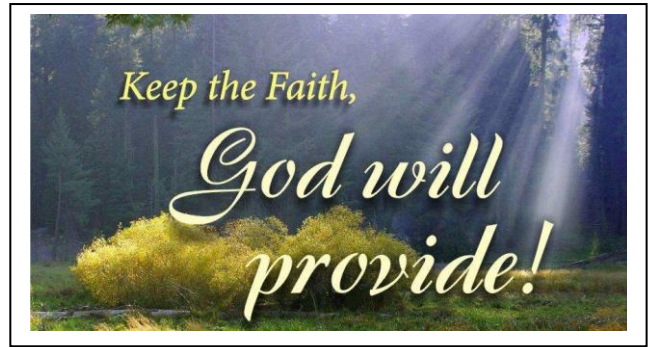


SUNDAY 3RD April 2022.

He Chose to give us Victory

Scripture: Romans 8:31-39



As you know, I am learning piano and trying to work out the right chords and notes on the page. My decision is - choose to play whatever I want meaning the tune sounds terribly wrong or choose to play the notes given to me which, in time, should sound a whole lot better and how it is supposed to be!

We all face decisions in our lives. Whatever instrument we use we can choose to play an ongoing tragedy – choosing to play to your own tune. Or playing praise and triumph by following the tune God has set out for you. How we play our song is our choice, but a decision must be made.

If we think of decisions as seeds we have 3 options for what we can do with them.

1. We can cling to our seeds and refuse to sow them.
2. We can sow our seeds in God or
3. We can sow our seeds in something other than God.

You may recall as a child saying to your parents - "I'm not going there and you can't make me?" Like going to the relatives for a meal knowing full well it would be boring and full of adult mumbo yumbo?

Or "I'm not eating that?" It may have been having to eat things you didn't like – like tripe or brussell sprouts – these were ones I never liked.

Or, wanting to play with the big kids and they didn't like you hanging around, so they made you perform some sort of feat to be in their gang. And when you accomplish it,

they disband the gang. So you get mad and say – I'm going to tell on you and you feel cornered, so you run all the way home to the safety of your mum or dad. And you stick out your tongue and thumb your nose at your attackers but they can't do anything about it.

Now you may have had similar experiences growing up, but often it was our faith in our parents or care givers that was greater than the bully's that pursued us. This whole scenario is not too far off from our spiritual walk in the world and the relationship we have with the Lord!

Like a child, we don't always know what's best for us, but God always knows and the love He has for us, is always greater than the circumstances of life! Our lives may run fairly smoothly most of the time but we all bump into various obstacles of different shapes and sizes. This is because the devil is always trying to figure out a new angle. He doesn't care what it takes to bring us down, just as long as we come down, so he can keep us there.

Sometimes he thinks he has us cornered, he always uses yesterday against us, to lay a trap for us today, but he always forgets about what lies ahead tomorrow! Because unlike God, he doesn't know what our future holds, he only has the now and the past to torment us with. He's been doing it that way, you know his usual tactics, condemning people, bringing up the past and scaring people for ever since he thought he was God's equal and got ejected from heaven.

Sadly, some people don't realize he's the one that's doing it to them, they think God is somehow trying to teach them a lesson. God does not need to throw us under the bus, to teach us a lesson. It is the devil doing things but somehow when things start to go wrong, God always gets the blame no matter what it is. And the devil is like Houdini, he

always vanishes from the scene after the damage has been done however a loving God, is always there to pick up the pieces and help us put it all back together again!

If what's going on in your life, isn't good and perfect, let me tell you it isn't from God. The devil's only objective is to punish us, but God's not out to punish us, Jesus was punished once and for all for us, on the cross. God wants to protect us. He loves us!! His yoke is easy, His burden is light.

If Jesus is the Lord of our life and our Saviour, God doesn't see our mistakes. Jesus' Blood sacrifice on the cross already covered them all! He sees us as righteous, because Jesus is righteous. Just because the accuser wants us to think we are always going to have problems, doesn't mean we have to believe him or go there! Sometimes we have to have the faith of a child and just say to the devil, I'm not going there and you can't make me! And then, say the name of Jesus and His Grace will be sufficient, no matter how great the temptation.

Isaiah 43:1-4 tells us: "Don't be afraid, I've redeemed you. I've called your name. You're mine. When you're in over your head, I'll be there with you. When you're in rough waters, you will not go down. When you're between a rock and a hard place, it won't be a dead end—Because I am God, your personal God, The Holy One of Israel, your Saviour. I paid a huge price for you: That's how much you mean to me! That's how much I love you! I'd sell off the whole world to get you back, trade the creation just for you.

WOW!, think about that, When we accept Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, we become the adopted sons and daughters of the Great God Almighty Himself. That passage of scripture is talking about us. God says that He would sell off the whole world to get us

back, trade the creation just for us. That's how much God loves us that He would be willing to do that just for us, what an amazing God we serve!!

Trusting that God is always at work for our good does not mean pretending we don't feel the pain of loss or that everything in life is beautiful when it's not. Jesus never flinched from acknowledging the reality of suffering; instead He gave us reason to hope in an even deeper reality.

In John 16: He says: "I have told you all this so that you may have peace in Me. Here on earth, you will have many trials and sorrows, but take heart, because I have overcome the world."

Some of the things that get thrown our way are petty and trivial, while others sometimes seem too much to bear. All of the problems are nothing but a distraction to take our focus off the promise of the love of God. And none of them are able to withstand the love of God.

Scripture says - the Love of God casts out all fear if we put on the whole armour of God daily, so we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Put on the whole armour of God, because we are not going to be able to get it done without Him. Sure we can try to make it on our own, but sooner or later we come to the realization, it just can't be done! If we are ever going to want to live in the peace that passes all understanding, for any length of time. He's the one who's going to give us the victory each and every time and help make us conquer all situations.

He's the One, who is going to back up our words to the devil of: "I'm not going there and you can't make me" when you say them!

There is nothing, no matter what may come our way that is stronger than the love of God!! David was comforted many times by the love of God and his love for God. David wrote in Psalms 91: "God, You're my refuge. I trust in You and I'm safe!"

God rescues us from hidden traps, shields us from deadly hazards, protects us with His outstretched arms, covers us with His feathers and keeps us under His wings.

God says: call Me and I'll answer, I will be at your side in bad times; I'll rescue you, then throw you a party. I'll give you a long life, give you a long drink of salvation!"

We don't have to wait for the sweet by and by, we can experience the goodness of God, there is plenty of Him to go around in our lives, in the sweet now and now!

God wants us to know we can enjoy the abundant life that He has promised to us.

We don't have to be weighed down by stuff, you know the stress and pressures of this life.

I'll finish with a story you may have heard before: A farmer walked around his farm to take stock of his losses after a fire had destroyed it. When he came to the chicken coop, he noticed the charred carcass of a mother hen. He used his foot to turn the carcass over and to his surprise, live chicks ran out from under it! There was nothing that was going to bring harm to her babies. The mother hen had died protecting her chicks from the fire.

That's how Jesus is with us, when we put our faith and trust in Him and His abilities, there is nothing He is going to let happen to us. Like the mother hen, He willingly laid down His life to make a way for all mankind.

Aren't you glad you know Him today? And if you don't know Him, why not take this opportunity to take Jesus into your heart and make Him the Lord and Saviour of your life. He's ready to step in and be your protector, your healer, your deliverer, your everything in every situation.