

Articles by George Rainey

George Rainey

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Christ: Our Only Hope Today

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George Rainey

Mr. George Rainey, the editor's father, is an octogenarian (not an octogeranium!) who at 83 is still very active in Christian service among the assemblies of God's people in North America, having been commended to the Lord's work over 60 years ago.

The days in which we live are serious and solemn. The greatest minds in our age are breaking God's bands and casting His love from them. Since Satan knows his time is short, he is writing the name of Christ on many things that are his own. He is content to let the world have Christ on its lips, provided he can keep his place in the heart. Sin is seen like a great flood and God, instead of resisting it, is retreating before it. And so it must go on till God retreats altogether from the government of this age that has rejected Him and gives it over, deluded and blinded, into Satan's hands. Then shall that Wicked One be revealed and strong delusion will come so that men will believe the lie. What is to keep God's people in such times and against such power?

There is the sovereign power of God. The other day I watched the tremendous power of the sea. As the mighty waves rolled in, I thought how utterly useless it would be to try and resist them. But they were broken into foam on the rocks and harmlessly set at naught when they met that which was stronger than themselves. Never could we stand in our own strength against the evil powers that are against us. How could

we oppose the might and wiles of the devil, or escape his power? However, all his craft, cunning and hate are broken when they meet the might and purposes of God. And this Saviour-God is our Great High Priest, loving and living and seated in heaven. This gives us confidence and courage in the darkest hours of trial. But this confidence does not make us careless, for the same Lord who tells us that we are kept by the power of God also tells us to cast our burdens and cares on Him, and He will support us. Moreover, we have learned what His pleasure is: "Great is our Lord, and of great power: His understanding is infinite" and "He taketh pleasure in them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy" (Psa. 147:5, 11).

Neither silver nor gold could redeem us or bring us to God, but Christ's redeeming blood did. And now we can with calmness and patience look upon all that is going on in the world, and hope and peace fill our hearts because we know the Lord is coming. We know that God is working out His eternal purposes, or rather, letting man work them out.

Time was when God governed the world immediately and gave the most minute directions for everything that was done under His hand. Now He governs mediately, allowing man — and often Satan — to have his way, yet overruling all, and making all things work together for His glory and for our good. Faith can be content to await the day when the world's great problems shall be worked out.

Meanwhile, we bow our hearts before Him in worship, waiting for Christ's return. Our place now, midst the world's awful confusion, is to acknowledge Him as the

rightful Heir of the world and the Lord of our life, our ways, our thoughts, our acts and our desires.

Pearls from the Psalms

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George Rainey

Mr. George Rainey, the editor's father, will be 80 years old on July 14th. He has been in the Lord's work for over sixty years and is still very active in an itinerant ministry, particularly among small assemblies of God's people, many of which he has visited faithfully for fifty years or more. This is his first article to appear in FOCUS.

It is cause for concern when we see believers whose lives are being hurt by fears; fears as to the family, work, health, and other real or fancied fears which keep us from enjoying the richness of the life of Christ our Lord.

It was Horace Walpole who said: "We are largely the play-things of our fears."

David, the shepherd-king, was not immune to fear. He admits in Psalm 56:3, "I am afraid," and then quickly adds, "I will trust in thee," that is, in the Lord. In Psalm 27:1 he states: "The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"

We can understand why David feared for his life. Psalm 56 belongs to the time when he was trying to escape the hatred of Saul, although some think it belongs to his sad experience at Gath, where God saved him from death. David was friendless, homeless, lonely and unwanted. The death that chased at his heels in Gath was a lesser

kind than what he had to endure from Saul who had grown jealous of David's rise to popularity.

An Answer To Fear

In Psalm 56 we have one answer to fear. "When I am afraid," David says, "I will trust in thee" (v. 3).

Why is it that we fear certain trials? Some of God's people are simply more susceptible to fear than others. When working in a hospital before going to China as a missionary, I watched different children. A door would slam shut and one child would cry with fright, while another child in the next crib would sleep on. Our training and family relationships bring into our lives many fears. Some of these may disappear; if they don't, they can become destructive and lead to physical problems.

Fear in itself is never sinful. What counts is what we do when we are afraid, and David purposed that he would trust in God. Here, then, we have the real cure of fear in the time of trouble. For us to share our fears with our family or with a trustworthy friend can be helpful, but trusting our Saviour-Priest is the best. Let us take all our fears to Christ who is living and loving, and then let us believe His Word: "Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you" (1 Pet. 5:7). Complete trust in Him is better than all human advice.

Three times David said, "I will praise His Word" (Psa. 56:4, 10). Here is the secret of his faith. He rested in the promises of God's Word and made them his own. Our faith and hope must rest upon His Word which cannot be broken.

Whenever we face a real fear we must take it to our Captain, Christ the Lord, leaving it in His all-wise hands and casting it out of our mind. Why? Because faithful is our Priest-King and it is His Word that will fetter fear.

Teach us to trust when there is cause to fear,

When trials come and tempests appear;

Help us to know that Thou, O God, art near.

Comfort And Sympathy

Again, we learn that Psalm 56 offers us comfort for our care and sympathy for our sorrow. "Put thou my tears into thy bottle. Are they not in thy book? ... God is for me" (vv. 8-9). Since David had reason to fear, he also had reason to suffer and sorrow. Friends had forsaken him, home was only a memory, and danger and death stalked behind him.

In all his suffering, David turned from his testings at the hand of the enemy to the God of all grace. He put out of his mind his foes who, as he said, "wrest my words" and "mark my steps, when they wait for my soul" (vv. 5-6). Here he hands over his cares, disappointments, and fears to the Lord. It was then that he had faith to go on his way, knowing that God had hold of his hand and would hold him fast. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31).

It is comforting for us to know that our Father knows all about our tears and He understands all about our trials. And not just some of them, but all of them that we pass through. David had shed so many tears and had experienced such great sorrow that it was necessary for God to put them into a wineskin. Thus David knew that those tears would be known by God as his. How very

tender is the heart of our Father when it comes to our need!

When it comes to the Word of God, we have comfort in the book of Revelation that David did not know. It is there that we read: "And God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying. neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away" (21:4). The Lord who keeps our tears in His bottle will one of these days wipe them from our eyes forever.

At a conference of God's people the story was told of a Christian lady who was dying. A brother in the Lord went to see her and asked, "Sister, are you sinking?" With a great deal of effort she raised herself up and in a voice of triumph told him, "Did you ever know a child of God to sink through a Rock? If my hopes were built on shifting sand, I would sink and be greatly distressed. But thank God, brother, I am resting on the Rock of Ages."

For us who struggle with fears, trials and testings, what a safe shelter is ours in the Lord. Is it any wonder that David could sing: "In God have I put my trust; I will not be afraid what man can do unto me ... I will render praise unto thee" (Psa. 56:11-12)?

Jesus, we are resting

In the joy of what Thou art;

We are finding out the greatness

Of Thy loving heart.

The Two Memorials (Joshua 4)

MIF 13:3 (May-June 1981)

The Two Memorials (Joshua 4)

George Rainey

Twelve stones were brought from Jordan and erected in Gilgal. The fathers were to tell their children of the safe passage they had through the river. This was a miracle brought about by God.

The child of God today has passed through the waters of death on to resurrection ground. Let this great deliverance wrought by God for us be our family subject at our tables with our dear children. These twelve stones would be seen by the passing crowds when the waters were low. They were there to demonstrate God's power, love and grace. We cannot forget our salvation and the Rock of safety which is ours. "On Christ the solid Rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand." May we never cease to magnify God's grace (see Psa. 40:2).

The presence of the Ark alone restrained the piled up waters. Thus the Son of God, our Great Saviour, stands between us and whatever would overwhelm us, especially sin and death. Do not reject Christ Jesus; in rejecting Him you reject your only salvation from sin and judgment.

Christ Jesus, the true Joshua, has been on the cross for us, and now there is a pathway by which the sinner can be saved or ransomed by faith and go into the heavenly city dry-shod with his sins gone and himself free from judgment. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and

that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8). I hope all my readers are sheltered by the precious blood of Christ. Remember, you are either sheltered by the blood or exposed to the horrors of eternal judgment.

The twelve stones set up at Gilgal teach us another lesson. The stones in Jordan tell me of Christ's death for me; the stones in Gilgal tell me of my death in Christ. In the one I learn that my sins have been put away through the work of Christ; in the other I see that the power of sin has been broken forever.

It is one thing to know that our sins are forgiven, while another thing altogether to know that our body of sin has been "done away" (Rom. 6:6), its rule gone, its dominion ended. We must believe this just as we have accepted Christ's death for our sins and learn the wonderful truth, "Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body" (Rom. 6:12).

I believe God and rest on His Word.

Workers Wanted for God

Workers Wanted for God

George Rainey

Mr. George Rainey, the editor's father, served the Lord for over 60 years. Now 87, he resides at "Park of the Palms," Keystone Hts., Florida.

There is a great need today for men of God. God has always wanted men, but never have they been more needed in the Church than now. We see from Holy Writ the kind of workers who have been in demand, whether in the past or present. Men like Enoch and Noah, of whom it is said, He "walked with God" (Genesis 5:22-24; 6:9).

Men like the Bereans — students of the Holy Scriptures, who will seek and search for the pure gold of the Word (John 5:39; 2 Timothy 3:16, 17). There is no easy road to learning in the school of God.

Men in authority like Nehemiah —willing, unselfish, brave, strong, loyal, determined to put down evil and boldly stand for the right, a terror to all evil doers (Nehemiah 13:4, 9).

Men like Daniel — not dazed by royal splendor, not brought into bondage by gifts of wealth; but steadfast in his calling to the work of God, whether with his own people or as a servant of Christ in a foreign land.

Men of prayer who will faithfully acknowledge in public as well as private their allegiance to the Saviour and so conduct themselves under all circumstances as to win the approbation of our Lord (Daniel 5:1-17; 6:1-28).

Men like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego — men who are God's chosen servants, valiant for the truth; courageous to follow the call of conscience, relying only on the right hand of God's power for help (Exodus 20:4, 5; Daniel 3:4-30).

Men like Jeremiah — cheerfully obedient, sympathetic, true and faithful (Jeremiah 13:1-10).

Fathers like Abraham — called the Friend of God (2 Chronicles 20:7; Isaiah 41:8). What greater honor, yea, what honor so great as to be called the Friend of God?

Heads of families like Caleb (Numbers 14:24), and Cornelius (Acts 10:2-33). Brethren like Aaron and Hur, who stood by and helped Moses in his great struggle with the Amalekites (Exodus 17:9-12).

Mothers like Hannah, who will teach and train their children to fear God (1 Samuel 1:10, 11:24-28). The greatest of all mission fields is the home (Proverbs 22:6). Think of training the family for God. This is what Hannah did with her son Samuel.

Wives like the one described in Proverbs 31:10-31.

Sisters Like Mary and Martha —ever ready to serve the Lord and to have a willing mind to obey His Word (Luke 10:38, 39; John 12:2, 3).

Maidens who will speak and be steadfast for God away from home (2 Kings 5:1-16).

Matrons like the godly Shunammite (2 Kings 4:8-37), or like Abigail (1 Samuel 25:2-33); those who will use their God-given minds to act with good common sense in His service (common sense is not so common today).

Young women like noble Ruth—who will give up all for God, if called to do so, to be identified with God's dear people (Ruth 1:16, 17; 2:11, 12).

Young men like Jabez—those desiring fellowship with God in prayer and determined to live uprightly (1 Chronicles 4:9, 10).

Followers of Christ like Barnabas (Acts 11:22-26; 9:27). He was a true son of comfort. A mighty missionary and builder for God and His Church. These are the men and women wanted and needed today. May we hear our Lord calling us into His vineyard to serve Him now.