

DESTINY BULLETIN

A commentary sent to the supporters of the ministry of Christian Destiny.

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Dear “Special Friend” of Christian Destiny,

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Despite the many pressures of our time, we are about to celebrate the world’s most important miracle, the most glorious event in the history of mankind, the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Happy Easter to you! The Resurrection makes possible the great reality of “*Christ in you, the hope of glory*” (Col. 1:27). Christianity is the inner presence of our living Lord.

There are a lot of people who believe that God is basically against us, that He is a sadist, and that He wants to inflict pain upon people. After all, we see war and suffering and sickness and poverty and painful difficulties in most of our lives. As a result, many people have been tempted to misinterpret God and say things about Him that are not true.

Because this is the resurrection season, we do well to think anew of the glory of that occasion and its most fitting application to our lives. “What does it mean to me today?”

First of all, the resurrection means that you and I are forgiven of all of our sins. The Apostle Paul speaks most pointedly of this when he says that Jesus Christ “*was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification*” (Romans 4:25). Did our dear Savior simply die as the hopeless martyr for a lost cause? The answer is “no,” He is our glorious Savior. He triumphed over sin on Calvary’s cross and we have evidence of this—the resurrection. Having been justified by His blood, we are confident of eternal salvation because Christ was raised again “because of” our justification. Christ declares all who believe in the finished work of the cross to be perfectly righteous. The proof of this is the resurrection. How marvelous is imputed righteousness!

In the resurrection of Christ there is a new life to live. Speaking about His post-resurrection life, Jesus said, “*Because I live, you shall live also*” (John 14:19). Make no mistake about it, Christianity is a faith to believe, but it is also a life to live. The life of God in the lives of men is what Christ promised, and the proof of the validity of that promise was His own resurrection. The empty tomb proves it all!

In the resurrection of Christ there is power for all occasions. Stating the great remaining ambition of his life, the Apostle Paul said, “*That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection*” (Phil. 3:10). Thus the Bible teaches that Christ takes up His residence within us. The Apostle Paul declares that His presence produces power, authority, capability, overcoming strength within us to live a life that is equal to every occasion. The Christian should be a vibrantly alive person indeed!

Therefore, as we celebrate the Easter season once again, we must remember that the resurrection of our dear Savior the Lord Jesus has awesome consequences in the life of all of us who believe. In these present hours, Christ is our enabling capability for all occasions. As we celebrate this

Easter season, let us also consider the millions of our world who do not know the forgiveness and presence of Christ in their lives. We must pray that there will once again be that overwhelming curiosity on the part of the lost to know the Lord Jesus and His life within. Having prayed, let us do what we can in order that others will be brought to the place where they will believe on Jesus Christ and have everlasting life. Remember that the resurrection is a part of the Gospel. The whole Gospel is the marvelous announcement that *“Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures” (I Cor. 15:3,4)*. Think of it, any person who believes that Jesus died on the cross for his sins as the Son of God and rose again, that person is given the marvelous gift of everlasting life. God offers this gift to all!

Sinners today need to hear not complicated religious formulas, but the glorious Good News that Jesus died and rose again and is therefore able to save them to the uttermost who come unto God by Him (Heb. 7:25). This, because He lives.

WESTERN CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION

As students of history and of our present situation, I am sure that you and I are mutually interested in these astonishing times. I do not doubt that we are both keeping an eye on the fast-moving developments of our world and, in the process, asking the question, “What are the moral, spiritual, Biblical, prophetic implications of these present times, and what may we anticipate for tomorrow?” This may indeed amount to the question, “Western Christian civilization—where is it going?”

Now, we are all aware of the problems in the use of the expression, “Christian civilization,” because we know that only individuals are Christian. Realizing that, we have, nevertheless, used the words “Western Christian civilization” for that remarkable entity which was born out of the Protestant Reformation and which has become the cultural fountainhead for virtually all of the good things that have happened in society from the year 1521 until now. Luther’s declaration of “The Bible alone, grace alone, faith alone” as the way of salvation has had an electrifying effect upon the world. For a thousand years preceding that time, Christianity was a sacerdotal religion, preaching salvation by works, endurance, church loyalty, indulgences, penances—and even then, no one could be sure that they possessed eternal life. Because of Luther, the Church rediscovered the doctrine of justification *“by faith without the deeds of the law”* and, therefore, Christianity, returning to the grace of God, preached the message of the priesthood of every believer.

Out of this, Western or Christian civilization was produced. This generally refers to the nations and cultures that believe in the existence of the triune God and think of themselves as being part of the Judeo-Christian tradition. Even this tradition has saved them from dropping into the bottomless pit of paganism, atheism and degeneracy which universally characterizes the balance of the world. Western Christian civilization is still the best thing around, better by an infinite degree than any other culture the world has to offer.

But now, Western civilization faces many oncoming dangers, from ferocious assault to silent, debilitating corrosion. Should this remarkable but fragile culture be destroyed, the world will certainly move into the darkest age mankind has ever known, “Made darker yet,” as Churchill said, “by the lights of perverted science.”

THE PERILS WHICH PRESS UPON US

- 1. The mounting influence of humanist philosophy.** That ridiculous document, “The Humanist Manifesto” has long since taken root in the American educational system and, therefore, in the assumptions by which the West perceives itself. Strengthened by the bizarre notions of evolution and utopianism, humanism is fast becoming America’s secular religion, as well as the religion of liberal churchmen.
- 2. The bankruptcy of religious liberalism.** At about the time of World War I, the leaders of all the major denominations foolishly succumbed to liberalism. Therefore, Protestantism in America stumbled and staggered for 25 years until the end of World War II. Those years also brought the emergence of fundamentalism, but its influence was little felt in the external world. So, the influence of decadent liberalism prevailed, producing corresponding liberal politics and liberal education. That influence, to a great measure, continues.
- 3. The ambiguity of evangelicalism.** In this generation, the emergence of evangelical Christianity has been a noted and significant thing. Now, evangelicals cannot decide whether they will or will not attempt to influence political issues, whether they will concentrate on spiritual endeavors or social action, whether they believe in salvation by grace or some sub-Christian message, and (a new consideration for obvious reasons) what is the proper doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The old rock-ribbed Calvinism that once made Christianity such a great external influence is now but one of a hundred voices.
- 4. The emptiness of materialism.** For years now, the gods of the marketplace have prevailed in the West. Now in America, money is losing its value, and our citizenry, satiated by an excess of material things, can only satisfy itself with perversion, bestiality, widespread drunkenness, and radical, dangerous politics. Why is suicide so much on the rise with our young people?
- 5. The modern technological revolution.** High technology was once the sole possession of America and its Western allies. Now, high technology has spawned itself, going almost everywhere. Japan, a pagan nation, is one of the leaders in this regard. Many a Banana Republic now has machine guns, bazookas, missiles, fast warplanes--and many already possess the ultimate weapon--nuclear missiles. Huge money has now flowed into many of these nations with the result that economic power, technological power, the power of good ideas, military power is moving, many times, to pagan nations.
- 6. The rising tide of militant Islam.** The fastest growing religion in the world today is Islam. In fact, the Muslims could very quickly become the dominant religious group in the world--if militant Islamic extremists have their way. Islamic fundamentalists like Osama bin Laden envision an Islamic world on the order of Taliban-ruled Afghanistan, including an Islamic United States--and they are willing to take it by force! If Christians do not follow Christ’s Commission to go *“into all the world, and preach the gospel”* with the same fervor as the Muslims follow the call to win the world for Allah, we could be in desperate trouble, indeed!

Western Christian civilization is, therefore, certainly now facing its most critical hour. What of the future? Is there hope for tomorrow? Can I grow up in freedom and Christian opportunity? These questions are now asked with increasing asperity by adults and especially the youth of our world. The

human answers to these questions are very difficult. Indeed, it will take more than positive thinking or fancy sociological notions to give any real promise for the future.

What do you think? Will God give the West, Judeo-Christian civilization, an opportunity to reach and perhaps surpass the greatness that it has known in days gone by? If this is our hope, certainly enlightened Christians must call for a number of imperatives in our time. Surely, these include:

- 1. A return to basic values.** This includes the law of God as found in Holy Scripture. The all-important question is “What do the Scriptures say?”
- 2. A return to constitutional government.** This necessity, fast fading in America, is imperative to life and to the prevention of anarchy. A doctrine of objective value is the first principle of any civilization.
- 3. Expanded spiritual opportunity for the Church.** Government must not make laws respecting established religion or limiting the free exercise thereof. When it does, the light of faith may be extinguished and a nation become crooked and perverse.

Concerning these things, Christians are certainly admonished in Scripture to “*shine as lights in the world*” and by doing this, they may be instrumental in influencing the course of a “*crooked and perverse nation*” (Phil. 2:15). The Christian, however, realizes that all that is human is also infected by original sin and, therefore, the world must inevitably pass away. In days like these, therefore, while he functions as an instrument of the Lord in this world, he also continues to look up for a redemption that continually draws near. Times like these should motivate us to be good soldiers for Christ in this world. They should also inflame within us that bright hope, the true destiny of the Christian, which will be realized only in its fullest sense when we move from this world to the world to come. “Jesus Christ is coming again!” is the message repeated again and again in the Word of God. In light of that fact, let us labor here, but also let us watch and pray as we anticipate His return.

The assurance of salvation—this is a question which presses upon the mind and conscience of many a Christian. Doubtless, the question persists because many mistakenly look at themselves and ask the question, “Have I been perfect? Have I been totally true to Christ all the days of my life? Have I submitted to His Lordship at all times and in all places?” If an affirmative answer to these questions is the basis of our assurance of salvation, any honest individual would be led to despair. Just so, many Christians are despairing these days because they have come to believe in some form of salvation by works, rather than the wonderful message of the Scripture that we are saved by grace. Beware of these oncoming influences in Christianity. As an antidote, read again the book of Galatians. Then, write for your free copy of “**The Devil’s Favorite Trick,**” a tract which we will send along to you with our compliments.

Updated from the writings of Dave Breese.