

## **“In the beginning God...”**

By Tony Tirse

“I love the sounds of the birds singing in the trees early in the morning.” This is one of my favorite quotes and is one that I repeat from time to time as I make an effort to stop in the midst of this busy world and be thankful for all the wondrous things the Creator has set about us. When we see a lazy cat basking in the sun on its back, or a seedling struggling to take its place among the tall pines of the forest, can we help but to be in awe of His mighty power and imagination?

*Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*

How often do we stop and take in this magnificent and incomprehensible statement? It is perhaps one of the single most amazing declarations ever revealed to mankind. Imagine our God, a being so immensely powerful and righteous, that He in one day created the entire universe and this planet with only His spoken word.(Psalm 33:9) But He wasn't done, He took a few more days and concentrated on creating in great detail all the things on the earth, saving His greatest for the last day before His rest: Man. And through man He has suffered His greatest sorrows and heartbreaks, and paid the dear cost of the ultimate sacrifice through Jesus Christ the Lord and Saviour.

*John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

It is truly amazing that in spite of all the things His greatest creation, man, has done against Him, He still loves us that much.(Rom 5:8) It is easy to stop in the middle of a walk on the beach and marvel at how beautiful the sunset is, or to hear birds chirping in the field early after a rain and say “Thank you, Lord, for such beauty,” but that is just the tip of the iceberg. We often “feel” His love when we are surrounded by beauty and lovely things, but what does that mean? To “feel” His love is more than just being content by lovely surroundings, it is more than having a positive emotional experience when everything is going well. I once read an anonymous quote that said “An optimist is someone who is optimistic when things are going their way.” What happens when tragedy strikes? Or when there is no tragedy, but life seems kind of mundane and pointless? This is when our true test of “lovely” and thankfulness comes. God provides many lessons in His Word concerning life when it is hard, and when it's good. See, God wants us to have good experiences and to prosper; but what we may view as good and prosperous is not necessarily His view of the same. This is where trust and faith come in. Sometimes there are no lovely birds singing in the trees or gorgeous fall sunsets on the beach, but that doesn't mean there isn't an almighty and loving God in control of the situation. We as Christians are assured that through all sorrow and adversity, He will be there and if we can just hold on and depend on Him, our reward will be everlasting.

*Mark 13:13 ...but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*

The end is not the end, but the beginning. When we get to the end of this life, it will only be the beginning with the Holy One who is righteous and true. Where are we going when all this is over? Well, heaven of course. But what is heaven? It is being in the presence of our Lord God, experiencing—feeling the light of His glory that lasts forever and ever.

*Rev 22:5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.*

So too, the lovely birds singing in the trees early in the morning is the beginning. As it was way at the beginning of creation. If we step back a little, and look at it from a different point of view, the hope of God and forever is in everything we see. Everything is a picture of Salvation to the believer who endures. The first thing to realize is that the hope of Salvation is manifest by the very fact that we *are*. We see, hear, smell, taste and feel all things created. Furthermore, we *think* and have feelings about everything. This is very real scientific evidence that our Creator is, was, and always will be here. (Revelation 1:8) Here? Where? Everywhere. He is the omnipresent One who knows everything and everyone. Some may say this is something to fear, but to the believer this is to rejoice! How wonderful it is to have our God take a personal interest in our lives and want to help us, strengthen us and love us as no parent could. We all face sorrow and hardship in our lives, that's just part of our human nature that we have to face while we are here. But the difference for the believer is that each of these experiences serves to make us a better person for His glory.

*Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

We may never know what that good is in this lifetime, but rest assured that our Lord is perfect and He has a plan for everyone. He is a loving God, but He is God never the less, this means that instead of questioning His plans, we are to trust Him and give Him the glory all the way. We are *His* creation, not He ours. Beware of the temptation of blaming Him or attempting to reason above him, for He is God and we will never be equal to Him.

*What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing*

*formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory*      *Romans 9:14-16,18-23*

*Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.*      *1 Corinthians 1:25*

How can we as Christians attain a heightened awareness of His presence in our lives and His love and purpose for us? There are two main themes in the Scriptures regarding this. Prayer and His Word.

*Mark 11:24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.*

*Mark 14:38 Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.*

Prayer is the single most powerful tool at our disposal, more powerful than the greatest military weapon in the world. Prayer is not just simply a last-resort tool or a ritual done out of tradition, it is a necessary fellowship with God and a privilege that He gives us. In this age of grace, we have the awesome ability to go directly to the Father with our supplications and praises through our Lord Jesus Christ. Note that as mentioned before, He is omnipresent and sees all of our secrets and all of our thoughts. (Mat 6:6) This, for the believer, isn't something to fear but something in which to rejoice. This is because at any time, day or night, fear or not, adversity or happiness, public or private, we can pray to our Loving God and He will hear us. He loves to answer prayer and is just waiting for us to ask, sometimes the answer is "yes", sometimes it's "no", and sometimes it's "wait." But He will answer those prayers for the sincere heart that wishes to do *His will* first. Short prayer or long prayer, as long we have that fellowship once, twice, or a few times a day. Imagine a father that has a son that says to everyone that he has a father, but never talks to his father. That's what some of us do, we profess Him but we don't speak to Him, then we wonder why things aren't exactly going the way we want them to. I am guilty of this more than I'd like to admit, it's easy to be in a hurry with a busy life and throw two or three habitual sentences at Him in the morning or before we go to bed and leave it at that. What a waste of a privilege! Imagine having a direct line to the White House and being able to talk to the President any time we wanted, even if he's busy with so many other things, he's willing to stop and talk with us; wouldn't you call him more often than not? My friends, our direct line goes to an infinitely higher office than the Oval one, yet we do not utilize it as often as we could and should.

*Psa 18:30 As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust in him.*

*Psa 33:4 For the word of the LORD is right; and all his works are done in truth.*

*Acts 6:4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.*

The Word of God. This is one of the most powerful descriptions of anything in history. To be able to hold and read our Bible and know that it is the inspired, infallible *Word of God*, how awesome. We as Christians have yet another privilege, to be able to communicate with Him through His Word. Oh yes, this is communication, for we can read it to Him with joy and singing, quote it to Him in prayer, hear it fresh and clean from other believers, and remember it as we remember Him during times of joy and sorrow. To the Christian, His Word is a source of great nourishment for our spiritual, mental, and even physical well being. Rest assured that this wonderful gift will never be outdated, and it will never fail us.

*Luke 21:33 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.*

*Rev 21:5 ...for these words are true and faithful.*

When we read His Word, if we open our hearts and minds to Him and pray for His Holy Spirit to give us understanding, we can actually feel the Spirit flowing through us like a gentle, refreshing stream. But just like food nourishment, we need to have a portion every day to keep us going strong, even if just one or two verses. We know how it's good to chew our food well before we swallow it so that it will digest well, in the same way we should "chew" on a particular verse or set of verses so that we can "digest" His word in our heart and be well nourished. We can never be too busy to show God how much we love Him by fellowshiping with Him and learning from His Word—if we are then something is wrong. Five more minutes away from that remote control or those golf clubs won't hurt but those same five minutes away from communicating with Him is depletion of the soul. Even Jesus knew the Word and He quoted it often, not just because He was God, but because He was also man and He needed it to defend and to strengthen Himself. Jesus also prayed very often and very intensely because He was man in the flesh and needed that communication with His Father just as much as we do.

So the next time we look out into the night sky and wonder at the stars, or when we hear the wonderful sounds of nature, let us remember the words of Psalm 19:1-6:

*The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to*

*run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.*

And we will know that the Lord our God, Creator of all Heaven and Earth is in charge of every minute detail in our lives, in the lives of our loved ones, and all of them who love the Lord. Let us never forget to pray, and read, and give Him all the praise and glory for He is a beautiful and merciful God, who's love for us surpasses all understanding even forever and ever. Amen.