

The Brown Street Beacon

*"...Shine out among them like beacon lights,
holding out to them the Word of Life" (Phil 2:15-16)*



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God Still Speaks to Us Today!

This morning, I heard God speaking to me. There are those who claim that God doesn't speak today, but there is no doubt in my mind that I heard Him speak. I'm sure you are wondering why God chose me to speak to and what exactly He said to me. Well, God told me not to fear. His specific words were "*Fear not.*" I'm so glad that God chose to speak to me and to give me this specific message. In this world of sin and sorrow we sometimes need to be comforted, don't we? In this society of crime and corruption, we need to hear from our heavenly Father that we don't have to be afraid. Hearing this from my God encourages me and it has given me the strength to continue to do the work I am called on to do as a preacher of the gospel.

Then I heard God say to me, "*I have redeemed thee.*" Oh how reassuring it is to hear this from God Himself. I know that I belong to God because it was He Who bought me with a price. The fact is God has spoken this truth to me on several occasions. So there is no doubt in my mind that I have been rescued from Satan and sin and that one day I will be with my Father in glory. I know this because God has spoken to me, and He told me so.

Why do you think that God spoke these specific words to me? Again, God said to me just as clearly as any words ever spoken to me, "*Fear not: for I have redeemed thee.*" Well, do you know why God spoke to me? He spoke to me because I was willing to listen to Him. God spoke to me because I allowed Him to. Yes, God could force me to listen to Him, but God doesn't do that with us. He only speaks to us if we want to hear Him. If you are willing to listen, God will speak to you too. In fact, if you are a child of God, the very words He spoke to me, He will speak to you. All you have to do is what I did this morning. Simply open your Bible and read Isaiah 43:1 and you will hear God speak.

The Bible is God's Word. It contains the most powerful message that can possibly be heard. It has a message of redemption and hope. It has a message of justification and salvation. It is also a book full of exhortations and admonitions that warn us of the consequences of not serving God or for disobeying His will. The sad thing is not too many people in the world today are willing to listen to God speak. They would rather listen to professors and scientists and professional athletes and entertainers instead of the One who has all knowledge and the One we all will have to meet in judgment someday.

Some religious folks who claim to believe in God and the Bible also add to the problem. They do this by claiming extra-biblical communication from God. When I said that God spoke to me, some of you probably thought I was saying that God spoke to me apart from the Bible. The reason some might quickly conclude that this is what I was saying is because that is what many religious leaders

in the world today claim. And while these people who claim that they hear the audible voice of God apart from the Bible are just not telling the truth. There is another problem they cause. These religious leaders actually cause the Bible itself to have less of an impact on the hearts of men and women today. In other words, they devalue the Bible by their claims.

Many people in the religious world today look first to charismatic men and women who claim direct revelation from God, and secondarily, they look to the Bible. There is only one place where you ought to look to hear God's will and that is the Bible. Direct revelation has ceased. The faith has been once delivered (Jude 1:3).

You don't have to wait, hope and pray to hear the voice of God speaking audibly to you apart from the Bible. The written Word is powerful and sufficient for you. All you have to do is allow God to speak to you by opening your Bible and diligently studying it. This is the only way God will speak to you anyway. Don't be deceived into believing that some men and women are receiving direct revelation from God today. They are not! And usually when they say they are, a scam is in the making. Read and study your Bible and let God speak to you through His written Word. He has a beautiful and personal message for you. All you have to do is allow Him to speak.

Don

Trust in the Lord

By Simon Harris

When driving around town I often see graffiti on road signs, bridges, overpasses, and even on tractor trailers that says: TRUST JESUS. I often wonder how it got there, and if the person who wrote it really does trust Jesus.

There is great reason to trust in the Lord. King David expressed the blessing of trusting the Lord in Psalm 37:3-4 where he wrote, "Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land, and feed on his faithfulness. Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart."

Notice what David says about trusting in the Lord:

First, trusting in the Lord means doing good. The only way man can do good is by following the word of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17). His word tells us what is good, and how to be good. There is no other way but His way.

Second, by trusting God we can "dwell in the land and feed on His faithfulness." For the Israelites this was literal, if they trusted in God they would dwell in the Promised Land, and God took care of them. For Christians, it is more figurative, meaning that God will take care of us. He will see to it that our needs are met. He has promised to never forsake those who are His (Hebrews 13:5). What more could we ask than for God to provide for us?

Thirdly, those who trust in the Lord will receive the desires of their hearts. Those who trust in God want one thing above all else—to be with God in eternity. Everything else is secondary. Trusting in God means there is real hope that we will get exactly what we want out of this life.

Trusting in the Lord means a change of lifestyle for all who come to Him, but it is a change for the better. Trust the Lord, and you will see how much better life on this earth can really be!