

**Articles and Sermons :: The REALITY of the Word of Faith by Poul Madsen**

The REALITY of the Word of Faith by Poul Madsen - posted by eagleswings (), on: 2004/9/6 3:37

THE REALITY OF THE WORD OF FAITH

DURING this week, from morning to evening, we have been concerned with realities. We have a risen Lord who loves us, even though He knows us. We have not been gathered here to discuss religion, nor to teach one another pious attitudes, nor to pray pious, unreal prayers, nor to teach one another pious, false humility. We have not been here to speak to one another about illusions, for the Kingdom of God is not in words, but in power.

Reality is the real power. There is not much power in speaking about joy, but there is a lot of power in having joy. There is not a lot of power in speaking about peace, but what a power there is in having and knowing peace! There is not much power in speaking about redemption, but to *have* and to *know* redemption is power indeed!

It is the same with the resurrection. It is one thing to talk about it, but quite another thing to know the power of His resurrection.

That is what we have been gathered around during this week -- power. Not the popular conception of power, which is spectacular and emotional. Actually, there is not very much power in working ourselves up emotionally for if we try to do that we find that it does not last very long, and we come down again. But we do not need to work ourselves up if we know that the Kingdom of God is power and we know that power -- the power of eternal life, of reality, of joy, of peace? of righteousness, of the risen Lord Himself. That is the power of reality based upon the mighty acts of God in which men have played no part at all. We read about them in 1 Corinthians 15, verses 3 and 4: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how 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." As Paul saw that, through the spirit of faith and in living contact with his risen Lord, something wonderful happened. We read his testimony in verse 10: "By the grace of God I am what I am." Does that sound proud? No, not at all, for it is real. It would have been false humility to say: 'By the grace of God, I am nothing.' Is there not more power in the grace of God than that?

Re: The REALITY of the Word of Faith -- by Poul Madsen - posted by eagleswings (), on: 2004/9/6 22:04

"By the grace of God I am what I am." you know that God's name is I AM. When He met Moses at the burning bush and Moses asked: 'What is Your name?', the Lord answered: "I AM." Now Paul says: 'That is also my name -- "by the grace of God I am what I am".'

You see how wonderfully real this is! Now Paul knows what life is, what being in living relationship with the risen Lord means, and so he calls himself "I am", without pride, full of gratefulness, knowing what he is speaking about. It is a mighty act of grace -- 'I am what I am. I am, *through* Him, and *in* Him.'

What was Paul? Perhaps you will say he was steadfast. Of course he was, for eternal life is steadfast, so he could not be otherwise. You might say that he was unmovable. Of course he was, for eternal life, the "I AM", is unmovable. It would be false humility to say: 'By the grace of God I am very unstable', or: 'By the grace of God I never come through any hindrance.' It is just ridiculous to talk like that, and yet many Christians, perhaps not directly, but indirectly speak and pray like that, which only proves that they speak out from themselves, without Christ, and pray out from themselves, without Christ. Therefore their words and prayers are illusions, not real. It is as if they would say to God: 'You have done nothing, Lord. You have given me nothing.'

Re: The REALITY of the Word of Faith -- by Poul Madsen - posted by eagleswings (), on: 2004/9/7 9:47

3. But what about Paul? Paul was "always abounding in the work of the Lord". Of course he was, for eternal life is like that. Would you like him to testify: 'By the grace of God I accomplish nothing!'? Would it be humble to speak like that, or pleasing to our risen Lord? Would it have been very humble for him to say: 'I have done everything I felt I should, but I feel that it was all in vain.' 'Ah,' you say, 'that is very humble! Nothing comes out of what I do, for I am so small and insignificant.' You know, when we say that we are insignificant, it almost always proves that we want to be significant!

"By the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

We must speak like that if we have the spirit of faith, and, therefore, through that spirit we are humble, boasting only of the Lord. We do not speak very much about ourselves, but of the Lord as Paul did here. It is all real, it is power. Therefore, it is quite reasonable for Paul to say in verse 58 of this chapter: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

I ask you to notice what Paul does not say: 'My beloved brethren, try to be steadfast, try to be unmovable, and do your very best to be always abounding in the work of the Lord.' Neither does he say: 'Be steadfast some day.' No, he does not talk like that. This is not an appeal to the 'old man', but just a reminder to the 'new man' to remain what he is, and to use this grace out from what he is in the Lord. It would be a contradiction in terms to say: 'I have eternal life, but I am not steadfast. I have eternal life, but I am easily moved.' There is a real logic in the world of realities, and therefore if you have the spirit of faith you cannot speak words of doubt. You must speak as Paul speaks here: 'By the grace of God you are linked with the risen Lord. You are here now and He is your very life' . You share His name and His power, and therefore you are steadfast, and because you are steadfast, be steadfast. You are unmovable. Recognize that and be unmovable.

Re: The REALITY of the Word of Faith -- by Poul Madsen - posted by eagleswings (), on: 2004/9/8 3:58

4. This is the spirit of faith, and is what John means when he says: "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4). As we are filled with that spirit of faith, so, even before we enter into any kind of work, we know that it is not in vain, and that it is purposeful. We have done it and accomplished it before we start doing it! It is not an experiment that can be either a success or a defeat, for it is prepared by the Lord. We are what we are in Him, and therefore we are not living in the world of experiments. Jesus did not experiment when He walked down here, for He walked with His Father. He knew that what He was doing would lead to the goal, and we know the same. By the grace of God we are what we are, and His grace has not been in vain. We have worked, but it is the grace of God and not we ourselves, so it bears eternal fruit. That does not make us full of pride, but neither are we humble in an illusory way. We are free to be ourselves in the Lord, giving all the glory to Him, feeling that it is a miracle of grace that we are in touch with reality, out of the world of illusions and in contact with God day by day, doing His work through the spirit of faith, both on good and on bad days.

I once met a lovely young Salvation Army girl. I only met her once, and have never spoken to her, but she made an unforgettable impression upon me. She had blue eyes, fair hair and red cheeks. She was in a tramcar in which I was also travelling. As she sat there her cheeks became redder and redder, her eyes became more and more strained -- and as the tram stopped she took out a tract, gave it to me, and jumped quickly off. She was the Lord's servant! She did her very best -- and I suffered with her! She had been sitting in that tram for ten minutes thinking of the tract in her pocket and of me

in the tram, and there was a struggle going on. At the last minute I received the tract and off she jumped!

Well, I am sure that many of you are in that kind of ministry! It is a ministry of pressure, where you are doing your very best -- and you wake up every morning hoping that you have no more tracts in your pocket! Ah, there is a better way if you have the spirit of faith. That spirit does not think so much about whether or not you should distribute tracts, but it keeps close to the risen Lord and fills your heart with confidence, so that, as you leave the matter to Him, all fear disappears and you tell Him about the tracts: 'I have faith in You, Lord, and if You want me to distribute tracts, You will prepare the way. You will not only allow me to distribute them, but You will remain in me so that my person is a tract. If my person is not a tract, then the tracts I hand out are not perhaps as powerful as they ought to be.'

By the grace of God we are what we are, and in Him we are steadfast and unmovable. Rely on Him! Do not experiment in one way or another, but walk with Him, and He will give you the words to speak.

Re: The REALITY of the Word of Faith -- by Poul Madsen - posted by eagleswings (), on: 2004/9/9 9:12

5. A friend of mine got a new job in an office about two months ago, and he asked the Lord to give him opportunities to speak for Him, but everyone was so busy and day after day went by without any opportunity being given. He began to be a little troubled, but the Lord gave him grace to remain unmovable, and he told the Lord from his heart: 'I have faith in Thee, Lord. I believe that at Thine own time Thou wilt open up an opportunity for me. If Thou hast risen from the grave Thou art Master of all things. I will not experiment.'

Then came our friends from Operation Mobilization to buy a Danish ship, and they went to my friend's office to have all the papers put in order. Then not only just one person, but all the people in that office came into contact daily with people who were buying a ship for use in the work of the Gospel. They had never had that sort of business before, so they asked questions, and my friend could speak about the Lord to one after another, without shivering with fright and without counting how many tracts he still had in his pocket.

By the grace of God we are what we are. His grace is not in vain. "Have faith in God." Be what you are -- a Christian, one who is spiritually risen from the dead, risen from sin, Satan and fear, and living just this very moment with that risen Lord.

An English brother came to us once in Copenhagen and said from the platform: 'I wish missionaries would tell the truth! I always hear wonderful stories from the mission field. They pray and God answers; they are in a difficulty, and God intervenes. I would like them to tell the truth and say: "We were in a difficulty and the Lord did not intervene. We prayed, and it was as if we could get no answer.'" Wonderful stories are good, but not good enough, for they do not convey the whole truth. We live with the risen Lord, so we can have difficulties, we can have darkness, we can have unsolved problems and we can carry burdens. We live with the supreme Lord, but He cannot always spoil us. He must train us, discipline us. He does not answer our prayers, so our faith is tested, but we have Him and we learn. Then the life we have which, in some way, is already full and complete, grows through our experiences, through our testings, through discipline, through unanswered prayers, and through problems, but it is all grace, for the Lord governs everything. He is supreme. He can take the burden away this very moment if He wants to, but if He does not, have faith in Him.

Re: The REALITY of the Word of Faith -- by Poul Madsen - posted by eagleswings (), on: 2004/9/10 6:23

6. It is very important to speak the word of faith. Do you know what the Lord Jesus said on the very last night? He said: "Righteous Father" (John 17:25). That is the last thing that we would have said, for He was being treated in the most unrighteous way, darkness was falling upon Him, and yet He did not say: 'Holy Father', or 'Mighty Father.' He said: "Righteous Father" -- 'You are right.' That is the word of faith.

We have a risen Lord, but He was crucified, and the marks of the crucifixion can still be seen in His hands and feet. He has given us a Divine calling. Peter defines part of that calling in words that we do not normally like: "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endures grief suffering wrongfully, for what glory is it if, when ye be buffeted for our faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable -- this is grace -- with God, for even hereunto were ye called" (1 Peter 2:19-20). Is it not wonderful to realize one's calling? Do you know anything more satisfying for a man than to reach that for which he has been called? He feels life abundant in himself, and satisfaction to the utmost degree.

Here is one part of our calling: To follow our Lord, not grumblingly, not with fear that would paralyse, but with faith.

"By the grace of God I am what I am." I am His. He is my Lord. What an honour to be identified with Him! I have His name, so why should I not share His fate? There is nothing about which to be fearful, but we should rather glory in Him. So James speaks the word of truth and reality, the word of faith, when he says in chapter 1: "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers testings, divers trials." That was not a piece of good advice, nor was it James saying something which he did not mean for himself. He meant it, for it is the word of reality, of truth. When we have taken that in there is nothing more that has any power over us. All things belong to us, whether they are the things that are now, things that will come, or death itself. Everything belongs to us, and we belong to Him, and so we say: 'By the grace of God, and that grace only, I am what I am, and His grace has not been in vain. I have worked, yet not I myself, but the grace of God.' And so we go on, steadfast and unmovable, knowing that our labours in Him are not in vain. The Kingdom of God is powerful. We do not speak very much about joy now, because we have it. We do not speak very much about peace, because we have that, but we talk all the day long about our wonderful Lord in whom we have found everything. We do not say to Him: 'Father, please excuse me. I cannot do Your will because You have not given me the power.' No, rather we say: 'Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth and doeth, through Thee.' - P. M.

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