

Reading: Philippians 4:7-9

*“Your principles have been the music of my life
throughout the years of my pilgrimage” (Psa 119:54)*

Spiritual warfare intensifies as this age comes to a close. “For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time” (Rev 12:12). The “Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God” is the only offensive weapon in the Christian’s armour (Eph 6:17).

Making God’s people doubt His Word has been the devil’s constant attempt since time immemorial (Gen 3:1). With the increase of knowledge he uses science and technology to shake up the simple faith of folks in the Bible. The Bible is not a science book but all true science agrees with it. Man-made theories come and go but the Word of God abides forever (1 Pet 1:24,25).

Young and old everywhere complain of “tension,” a word scarcely known earlier when life was simple. Tranquillity comes through the Word of God. The Word is “true...noble...just...pure...lovely...of good report...virtuous...praiseworthy.” When we soak our minds in it, the “peace of God” and the “God of peace” are ours! (Phil 4:7-9).

Problems and worries multiply in alarming proportions in all spheres of life. Days are becoming gloomier and gloomier — even before the sun has turned into darkness and the moon into blood! (Acts 2:20). The Psalmist comes with a time-tested remedy for our malady: “Unless Your Law had been my delight, I would then have perished in my affliction...Your statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage” (Psa 119:92,54).

The floods come and the winds blow. Yet once more God is shaking the earth and the heaven that “the things which cannot be shaken may remain.” Unless our life and work are founded on the solid rock of God’s Word, great will be the fall (Mt 7:24-27; Heb 12:25-27).

The serpent is pouring forth a flood of false doctrines on the earth. The counterattack is by the “Word of God and Prayer” (1 Tim 4:1-5). The time has come when men do not endure sound doctrine but prefer fables to facts (2 Tim 4:1-4). We are to keep on practising and preaching the Word.

The solution to all our problems—spiritual, social or political—is in the Bible. The Bible never grows old. The Bible among books is what Christ is among men. The Bible is not only the Book of God but also the god of books!

*Oh! may I love Thy precious Word, may I explore its mine!
May I its fragrant flowers glean, may light upon me shine!
(Edwin Hodder, 1837-1904)*

Almighty God, to You belong all glory, praise, honour and dominion. You alone are worthy to be praised. Oh, how great is Your goodness, which You have laid up for those who fear You! How great is Your graciousness, which You have prepared for those who trust in You! We rejoice in You, Lord. We are making a melody in our hearts unto You. Your praise is continually in our mouths. Let Your Name alone be exalted! Your throne is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Your Kingdom.

We thank You, dear Lord, for the stream of hymnologists and musicians You have been raising from the times of Deborah and David. Thank You, O Lord, for the psalms, hymns and spiritual songs through which we are able to extol Your holy Name. Thank You for our youngsters for their enthusiastic participation in singing praises to Your holy and awesome Name. We thank You for the modern instruments of music and sound equipments. What a blessing to hear joyful shout in Your house! We are looking forward to the day when we would be ushered into ceaseless worship in eternity. Until then, let Hosannahs and Hallelujahs be continually there in our lips!

Dear Lord, help us to watch out for the devil's trick to turn Christian music into mere excitement and performance. Save us from losing holy and reverential fear in Your presence. Help us rejoice with trembling and brokenness. You are great and mighty. But for the blood of Christ, we have no access to Your Throne. Help us identify the cheap substitutes the devil introduces into Christendom for pure and acceptable worship.

Dear Lord, we pray for a restoration of balance between exhilaration in worship and exposition of Your Word. Prevent us from tilting the balance towards exclusion of solid preaching of precious truths of the Scriptures. Let us work towards filling our hearts with the Word of Christ so singing and praising You become a spontaneous outflow. Forgive us for the unhealthy competition among the singers and musicians. Deliver us from the lust for prominence and popularity. Let pomp and show quit our TV programmes. Sorry, Lord, we often sadden Your heart instead of gladdening it. Not our skills and talents but let Your glory be revealed. As in the days of old, let Your Shekinah glory descend on us to hide the singers and musicians. Bring us, O God, to a point where we would not be able to even stand but fall prostrate before Your mountain-melting presence. All hail the power of Jesus' Name! Amen!

(Mt 6:13; Psa 31:19; 34:1; 45:6; 89:14; 96:9; 97:2; 148:13; Judg 5:1; 2 Sam 23:1; Eph 5:18-20; Rev 7:9-12; Rom 12:1,2; Col 3:16; 1 Ki 8:10,11; 2 Chr 5:13,14)