

Something to Pray About

June 2014 – Cindy Sears

...because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Romans 8:21

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Romans 12:21

God's Kingdom Is Here—Now!

When God created the world, He looked on it and “God saw that it was good” (Genesis 1:25b). Then came *the fall*, and soon God noticed “that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5). So, God washed the whole earth clean, except for one family; and sent them out to replenish the earth. Yet, evil continued to flourish, even after God set aside one nation on the earth to be an example of righteousness for all mankind. Prophets of God came and went, but nothing could stop man’s evil from flourishing, even within the nation of God’s chosen people.

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). The Christ, Jesus, was an embodiment of the Creator and His righteousness in a man. Jesus showed us how to live out the truth of made “in the image of God.” He was killed and buried, but He rose from the dead. The Truth cannot be destroyed. The Word continues to live.

The death and resurrection of Jesus provided a road to our salvation, our deliverance from the tyranny of sin and death in our lives. “For the death that He [Jesus] died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Likewise, you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:10-11; read the whole chapter).

When Jesus ascended into heaven, He left His disciples in charge. What are we in charge of? “And he [Jesus] said to them, “Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see that the **kingdom of God** has come with **power**” (Mark 9:1). On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended and power was given to the new people of God. The Kingdom of God has been ushered into the world. It is no longer limited to one person, as in Jesus, or one people, as in the Israelites; but flourishes over the whole earth and in all peoples and nations.

Have you not wondered why the early Christian church spread so rapidly and soon shook the Roman Empire to its core? Why were the first Christians so willing to die for what they believed? Because they knew that the Kingdom of God had already come and that they were working for the One, True King of the earth—Jesus Christ. No earthly king or power, no earthly pleasure or privilege could top that. They knew that Jesus Christ was in charge. “Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘**All authority** in heaven and on earth has been given to me’” (Matthew 28:18). And Jesus had commissioned them to go to all nations and peoples and teach “them to observe all things that I have commanded you” (Matthew 18:20).

We Christians are not just “passing through this world of woe.” We are building **in** God’s kingdom. We are making things right in every way we can. We fight for justice. We defend the weak and the fatherless. We speak out against evil in all its forms. We bring reason and truth to the world. We lift

people up from poverty **and** sin by sharing our resources and teaching them about righteousness. We work in the power of the Holy Spirit to do good deeds every day—at work, at home, at play. No sphere of influence or activity in this world is out of bounds, except evil.

As God’s agents in His Kingdom, we play the part of God (in His image) by: providing (making clothes, growing food, delivering food, building houses, etc.); by protecting (restraining evil and corruption through government, police work, military service, protest, and finding cures for diseases); and in redemption/renewal of the world (recycling, preaching the gospel message, cleaning the air and water, teaching people to take care of themselves and how to earn a living). **All good work is Christian ministry.** We overcome evil with good (see Romans 12:21). We pray that God’s “will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Then we go out and work at making it so. We are the hope of the world. And what we do here NOW counts, because we are working in God’s Kingdom NOW. And we will live here after Christ comes again and receives all things unto Himself, including a renewed and redeemed earth. (Sorry Charlie--no harps, no floating on clouds.) For God does love the world, and He will redeem it all. Let’s get to work and help Him do it.

“Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.” Revelation 21:1a ✠