

## **“But Having The Same Spirit Of Faith ...”**

“... according to that which is written, I believed, and therefore did I speak; we also believe, and therefore also we speak: knowing that he that raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up also us with Jesus and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sake, that all grace, being multiplied through the many, may cause the thanksgiving to abound unto the glory of God” (2 Cor. 4:13-15).

This quotation from Psalm 116:10 is Paul’s first direct quote from the Old Testament (although others will follow) and is Paul’s affirmation that as the psalmist’s words were only the echo of his faith, so are his. In Psalm 116 the psalmist expressed his love for the Lord because the Lord had answered his prayer (116:1-2). He had been in straitened circumstances: “The sorrows of death compassed him, and the pangs of hell got hold upon him ...” but the psalmist had called upon the Lord to deliver his soul, which the Lord had done (Psa. 116:3-4). Because the Lord had delivered his soul from death, he expressed his hope: “I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living” (Psa. 116:8-9). Having so declared his trust, he then added, “I believed and therefore did I speak ...”

In preceding verses from 2 Corinthians 4, Paul had written that he was “pressed on every side; yet not straightened; perplexed, yet not unto despair; pursued, yet not forsaken; smitten down, yet not destroyed ...” in all these expressing a familiar idiom we sometimes utter “Down, but not out”. Paul’s faith was based upon his confidence that “knowing that he that raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also with Jesus and shall present us with you” (2 Cor. 4:14).

The expression “raised up” Jesus may sometimes mean that Jesus had appeared at the opportune time to accomplish certain things for mankind. Peter, in his second sermon recorded by Luke, quoted the promise that God had given Abraham: “and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed” (Acts 3:25). Peter then added, “Unto you first God, having raised up his Servant, sent him to bless you in turning away every one of you from your iniquities” (Acts 3:26). Peter meant, in substance, what Paul had written in Galatians 4:4: “But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons” (Gal. 4:4-5).

Sometimes the expression “raised up” refers to our resurrection from the crucifixion and death of sin in man when he has repented and is baptized into Christ and raised up from the watery grave to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:3-4). Paul in Ephesians 2:5 refers to the same event when he said, “Even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace have ye been saved) and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly places ...”

However, here in 2 Corinthians 4 the phrase “raised up the Lord Jesus” alludes to Christ’s resurrection from the dead and ultimately to our further resurrection from the dead because He first had raised up His Son. The resurrection of Christ was the

cornerstone of Paul's preaching, an essential part of the gospel (1 Cor. 15:1-4). Paul argues at length for a general resurrection in 1 Corinthians, arguing that if there is no resurrection from the dead then Christ hath not been raised. The resurrection of Christ and the general resurrection of man are irrevocably tied together. If one occurred, so will the other. If one does not happen, then neither did the other.

The language of both Psalms and Paul's quote from it is a language of conviction. God would both raise up the apostles and with the faithful (also raised from the dead) they would be presented to the Father, along with Christ. And because Paul was so persuaded, he would preach that conviction to all. The resurrection was a grace bestowed upon the many who in turn brought about the thanksgiving of the many!

Because of his conviction in a future resurrection, Paul said, "Wherefore we faint not; but though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory, while we look not at things that are seen but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. 4:16-18). Because Paul believed in the resurrection of Jesus (and in his own), he would not faint or lose heart. He acknowledged he suffered afflictions, but he called such "light" because in comparison with the future heavy glory, they were light. They were light because they were momentary; the glory he expected to receive was eternal. Sometimes, in the midst of adversity, it is difficult to put everything in a proper perspective; but a proper faith enables us to do so. The things that plagued and afflicted him were nothing to compare with the glory he expected to receive after awhile. Thus he wrote "We also believed, and therefore also we speak."

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