

**THOUGHT FOR THE DAY:** ~ The out-and-out Christian is a joyful Christian.

The half-and-half Christian is the kind of Christian that a great many of you are --little acquainted with the Lord. Why should we live halfway up the hill and swathed in the mists, when we might have an unclouded sky and a radiant sun over our heads if we would climb higher and walk in the light of His face?

~Alexander Maclaren

### **JESUS, THE BURDEN BEARER**

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” (Jeremiah 29:11 NIV)

This familiar scripture has been read, preached, taught, and prophesied again and again and still it continues to portray to the world the heart of our heavenly Father—the Lord God Almighty—and those plans of God change not—they have been set forth in the lives of the believers. They are plans for a hope and a future.

The plans of Satan portray a much different picture. The Bible is very clear on Satan’s purpose. John 10:10 says, He comes as a thief to steal, kill and destroy which is the opposite of God’s purpose—to give life in all its fullness. There has been numerous accounts in the US media of darkness and spiritual violence that is staggering to the imagination. Children are being abducted, murdered and violence is running rampant in the streets worldwide. God is calling for the Church to wake up, be prepared and to fight the evil. Pray! Seek God’s strategies for the coming battles; it is in His knowledge—through His understanding that we are able to defeat the enemy.

Be all that you can be in the Kingdom of God as you fight the good fight against the powers of darkness. Like it or not, spiritual warfare is the Christian’s reality and is seen throughout the Bible, especially in the New Testament. Church, we need to be aware of the powers of darkness and be prepared in the Holy Spirit to deal with, fight and overcome the evil powers of darkness. Become knowledgeable (alert and fully informed) in spiritual warfare, embrace it and therefore, prepared for whatever the enemy sends against you. Your demise comes when you are “caught off guard!” Remember that we still have a hope and a promise in God despite what is seen in the natural and what Fox News tells us.

We read in 1 John 3:8 “...for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was being manifest, that He might destroy the works of the devil.” The Body of Christ is being called forth in spiritual warfare to fight the powers of darkness. That’s right! God will use you and me! Then add Jeremiah 29:11—our promise of hope and a future—I’d say the believer has the winning hand! In God’s authority and dominion we will effectively deal with the evil in the coming days. Therefore, keep asking the Lord to prepare you to be ready to play your part in the great harvest.

At a time that we need our faith steadfast and moving effectively in prayer, the enemy comes in: either like a flood or in very subtle sneak attacks. You may at times feel like you’re on an emotional roller coaster and someone removed your “safety bar” so you have nothing to hang on to, but listen, to what

God is saying to you: “Don’t give up now! Don’t throw away your confidence in My promise! It surely will come to pass”. We can trust God’s promises given to His children.

Hebrews 10:35-39(NLT) says it this way—Do not throw away this confidence trust in the Lord, no matter what happens. Remember the great reward it brings you! Patient endurance is what you need now, so you will continue to do God’s will. Then you will receive all that he has promised. For in just a little while, the Coming One will come and not delay. And a righteous person will live by faith. But I will have no pleasure in anyone who turns away. But we are not like those who turn their backs on God and seal their fate. We have faith that assures our salvation. Church, persevere in order to see God’s will done.

Christians in countries, like Africa, Haiti, Mexico and so goes the list, have been dealing with demonic activity for years. Missionaries are daily are called into spiritual warfare; they are not strangers to the demonic. It is a fact of life in many countries, so you can stick your head in the sand if you chose, but when you pull your head out at some point in time, the powers of darkness will still be there and you will still have to contend with them. So makes good sense to me to learn how to do spiritual warfare God’s way. His way works and he is behind you 110 %!

We must be open to exam our hearts and lives and be willing to throw off the burden that we are carrying—burdens often of our own doing. Those burdens can press hard upon us and the next thing we know we have jumped out of the frying pan into the fire. Burdens absolutely can stop the flow of God in your life because you’ll start focusing on them instead of on the mercies and grace of God. An effective warrior in God’s army knows how to release burdens that would otherwise bring him down and render him unfit for duty.

Some of the burdens that act as lead weights upon our feet and chains wrapped around our bodies are sins of the flesh: unwise choices, shortcomings, anger, unforgiveness, negative words, thoughts and actions, fear, guilt and bad attitudes and etc. Why hang onto the burdens when God is willing to take them and release you?

If you have burdens and are tired of carrying them around, give them to Jesus—the Burden Bearer. Exchange your sorrows for His joy, your doubts for His peace and increase your faith. For your tired and weary body He’ll give you rest. He will take your burden gladly; giving victory over sin as you trust Him and purpose to walk by faith and not by sight. Remember that Jesus is always near; He’ll never leave you. He is faithful to His promises and will never let you fall for He hears even the softest whisper.

God always does things right. His way is always the best way, even if to us it seems all wrong. Whatever you receive, TRUST God for the results. You can be sure that He will always give you what you, not always ask for or want, but what you NEED at the appropriate time.

Join me in this prayer and let’s agree together as we give Him our burdens

Heavenly Father,

I lift up to You right now the burdens I have been carrying around that is bringing torment to my soul and tearing me down in mind, body and spirit. I thank You God that Your Word promises rest for my soul. I come to you right now, Your broken and weary child, and I ask You to reach down and take my burdens. I receive Your love! I release my faith to believe.

I remove the burdens with all sin attached and I give them to You. Forgive me for holding on to them. Take them Father God, I have struggled with them long enough and I don't want to carry them any longer. I thank You for Your never ending love and that you are lifting my burdens this moment—I declare them gone in Jesus' name. Thank You for setting me free.