

# Glory to a Merciful Savior

“. . . I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; 13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did [it] ignorantly in unbelief. 14 And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. 15 This [is] a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. 16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. 17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, [be] honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.” (1Ti 1:12-17 AV)

There is a great reminder of one's need for a merciful Savior. Paul never forgot who he was before Christ. He understood that God had brushed aside, at great personal cost to Himself, a multitude of sins. Paul was not very lovable yet God was and is. Three things leap from this short passage: 1. Christ came to save sinners. 2. Christ is characterized by longsuffering. 3. Christ deserves honor and glory from His children.

## Christ Came To Save Sinners

Are you not thankful that Christ came to save sinners? Who among you would not say as Paul, “I am chief” of sinners (v.15)? It is a wonderful thought on which to meditate: God saved a wretch like me!

This means of course there is hope for those to whom you witness. It is very easy to believe that God is not saving people today. Satan would have us believe that the Gospel is archaic for this modern world, but Paul called it the power of God for salvation (Rom 1.16). When you think of that neighbor who causes you great distress, guard against thinking he is a lost cause. He is no more a lost cause than you were. Also, what does that attitude say about your love for that person? If not one soul is saved because of your ministry, it should not deter your effort to lovingly tell others about the peace of God. The motive to evangelize must be love, or it will be very short lived.

## Christ Is Characterized by Longsuffering

Paul obtained mercy that Jesus might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them who would believe (v16). To what pattern do you think he was referring? Certainly it was His pattern of longsuffering. How does that impact your life as a believer? Surely it is to be a quality that all believers need to promote in their lives.

This is not a human quality, but a divine quality. What are the fruits of the Spirit? “. . . The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith” (Ga 5:22 AV). The flesh is anything but longsuffering.

Dear friend, if you find it difficult to love, remember who you were before Christ. How many sins did Christ have to endure before He saved you? How many insults did He hear from your lips, how many lies, how many times could He have snuffed out your life, and been completely justified in doing so? It doesn't take long to realize how much He suffered that you might live. That is longsuffering.

## **Christ Deserves Honor and Glory**

No believer needs to be told that Christ deserves all the honor and glory he/she can give Him. It may be beneficial to remind believers to examine if they are indeed giving Him all the glory and honor due His name.

The United States of America has a flag that Americans call Old Glory! The flag is a national symbol that honors the bravery and solidarity of the citizens of this great country. Believers should be willing to fly another flag with more passion than even the American flag that being the flag of Christ (speaking metaphorically). Christ said something very strong on this matter.

“Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels” (Mr 8:38 AV).

Christ died for you. Should you not be willing to die for others? Christ said there is no greater love than to lay down one's life. It is a great honor and brings glory to His name for you to pick up your cross and follow Him in His pattern of longsuffering. Remember where you came from, remember how He died for you, and give Him all the glory and honor due His name by practicing longsuffering to others. He is a great and mighty Savior! Amen!