



REPENT AUSTRALIA

“If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”

2 Chronicles 7:14

Volume 14:10

October 2009

www.repentaustralia.com

GREATEST OF ALL

The pagans of long ago regarded Justice, Fortitude, Prudence and Temperance as the great virtues; the French revolutionists esteemed the greatest virtues to be Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. Christianity considers them to be Faith, Hope and Love; and that the greatest of them is Love. The imitation of Christ means the life of Faith, the life of Hope, the life of Love. Therefore these three great virtues that the Word of God holds so dear and as everlastingly true are surely worthy of our consideration.

Faith

What is Faith? Faith is the channel through which God's righteousness flows into our souls through His Word. It is trust in God and His Christ. In the words of a great theologian of a century ago, Dr James Hastings, "It is the resolution to stand or fall by the noblest hypothesis that we can conceive. It is the spirit of Athanasius when he stood against the world; of Luther when he said 'God help me, I can do no otherwise'; of Job when he said, 'Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him'; of the three young Hebrews in the fiery furnace when they said, 'He will deliver us out of your hand, O King. But if not, we will not serve your gods'. It is the spirit which has given courage to all the martyrs to face death. Faith is the confidence that somehow or other the right must triumph, that God is stronger than Satan." Faith, too, is trust in the saving power of Jesus Christ. It means to accept, without reservation, the injunction of the Apostle Paul to the Romans to "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved." Faith is not a doctrine about Christ that will save us, but trust in the saving power of Christ. It is also trust in God as a Father that will sustain us when nothing else can and, as children of God, the assurance that all our trials are actually disguised blessings designed by the love and wisdom of our heavenly Father. For, indeed, character is formed more from our trials than our enjoyments. A painting would have no beauty or effect without shade. Surely the truest test of faith is to have lived in a world of unbelief, as we do today, and still to trust in God and Christ and Eternal Life despite the assaults of modern doubt. Moreover, "Faith is the victory that overcomes the world".

Hope

That leads us to Hope. You may wonder why Hope should be ranked so high, placed on a level with Faith and Love. Hope of all things is delusive and treacherous; it tempts us to dream dreams which cannot be realised and diverts us from realities that should concern us. In fact, hope has been called "the mother of half the mistakes, half the fruitless wanderings, half the unhappiness of the world". Nevertheless, hope is the prominent character of the Old Testament; and the whole Bible, from first to last, is one unbroken call to hope. Indeed, some of its most stirring words are those which speak of Hope: "The God of hope...we are saved by hope...Christ in you, the hope of glory...the hope that is before us...overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Even our own common sense tells us that life would be a poor shrunken thing without hope. While recognising that hope may be an evil if it leads us to trust in luck rather than our own efforts, we cannot fail to see that hopelessness is a still greater evil. Why, who could battle on through a lifetime of struggle and suffering without hope?

Hope elevates, strengthens and inspires---which is why it ranks with Faith and Love. Hope is a refusal to be borne down and depressed by evil; it is a refusal to look on the dark side of things. Hope is a spiritual quality that fights with power on the side of God. We can give up hope when the Saviour of the world confesses Himself defeated, but until then He calls on each one of us to set our hope on Him. John Wesley ran tirelessly throughout England spreading this hope. This is the kind of hope needed today if we are to see this nation changed and truly become "The Great Southland of the Holy Spirit".

Love

Then there is Love. The great religions of the world are distinguishable from each other by some supreme characteristic. With Hinduism it is mysticism; with Buddhism it is asceticism; with Islam, fanaticism; with Humanism, secularism; and with Christianity, it is Love. The first and greatest commandment of Christianity is love to God in Christ. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind." With God as the centre of the heart and mind everything in life will revolve around Him. The second is like it: "Love your neighbour as yourself." Love is the great attribute of God, and the more love we attain the more do we become like Him. "Beloved," wrote the Apostle John, "let us love one another; for love is of God, and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. God is love; and he who dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him." Moreover, there is no fear in love, for perfect love casts out fear.

Inseparable Companions

Though we separate Faith, Hope and Love they are really inseparable companions, closely united. What is Faith without Hope and Love? Faith without Love is just a cold conviction of the intellect, without any feeling in the heart. And without Hope, Faith would never see heaven. What is Hope without Faith and Love? At best, it is an idle dream from which one day we will awake. And what is Love without Hope or Faith? It is only a warm feeling in the heart, not a spiritual principle of life. If Love doesn't believe, it must die; and if it has no Hope it will ultimately produce only suffering and anguish. But, inspired by Love, Faith is the grateful acceptance of God's Love. Hope, too, without Love, is only the selfish anticipation of our own satisfaction and desires. Inspired by Love, however, it is the glad expectancy that God will work all things according to His good pleasure. So, in a word, there are three things that last forever: Faith, Hope and Love; but the greatest of them is Love. "Love is patient; love is kind and envies no one. Love is never boastful, nor conceited or rude; never selfish, not quick to take offence. Love keeps no score of wrongs; does not gloat over other men's sins, but delights in the truth. There is nothing love cannot face; there is no limit to its faith, its hope, and its endurance." What a wonderful world it would be if we all lived by this divine code of behaviour!

An Invitation

Yet one day we all will. That is, all of us who have consecrated our lives to God through Jesus Christ, acknowledging Him as our Saviour and Lord and are now eagerly awaiting His return in grandeur to set up His glorious Kingdom on earth. Does that include you? Are you preparing for here or for eternity? The choice is up to you. God has done His part; you now have to do yours. Will you?

PRAYER

Almighty God, our loving Father, how majestic is Your name in all the earth. As children of the blood covenant established in Your family of faith, we come with contrite hearts to love and worship You in Spirit and in truth. Thank You for being our Abiding Presence, Eternal Supplier, Provider, Healer and Peace, and our Good Shepherd as revealed in the various facets of Your holy name. Abba Father, thank You, too, for reconciling each of us by Your Spirit through the Lord Jesus so we can enjoy a personal relationship with You and live by the principles expounded in "Greatest of All". Encourage us, O Lord, to serve You steadfastly with faith, hope and love through all our trials and tribulations, allowing You to use us to advance Your purposes in leading lost souls into the Kingdom of God. Grant us, dear God, the spiritual freedom to grow in grace and wisdom to full maturity, measured by nothing less than the fullness of Christ, our Kinsman-Redeemer. We pray all this in the majestic name of JESUS CHRIST, the King of kings and Lord of lords, to the glory of God Almighty. Amen.

R.A: Led by our Lord Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit to glorify the Fatherhood of God with the Brotherhood of Man; in love and in faithfulness to bring glory and honour to His holy name.

REJOICE IN COVENANT PRAYERS FULLY IN THE HOLY SPIRIT DAILY FOR AUSTRALIA'S REVIVAL.