

Oh Yes... WE CAN WIN!

Gabriel L. Mancino



The date on the trophy above is always up-to-date! To “walk with God,” that is, living in the way pleasing to Him, is to walk in holiness. That is a walk of obedient faith. Such a walk has a starting point and a “finish line,” so to speak. It also has a present-continuous aspect.

The past may have some awful memories or “skeletons” (hopefully confessed and abandoned) or its joyful experiences and accomplishments. Past realities...the good or the bad...can be used to help or to hinder us. The future may have its hopes to embrace and pursue, and its fears to face and conquer. God’s promise of our cleansing from all sin and union in fellowship with Himself is conditioned upon “IF we walk in the light” 1 Jn.1:7. So, holiness is primarily a present tense experience.

We cannot hope to win a race we haven’t entered, nor achieve a goal without applying the required effort. To quit or be disqualified would also end all possibility of attaining the aim.

We will ALL “win” something at the finish line. Life is not just a spectator sport. People unlikely enter a contest to “win the prize” for which they have no interest. We will all win something, whether or not we put forth conscious effort or break out in a sweat. The Bible says “The wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23). No sane worker turns down his pay cheque... but sin pays wages! Wilfully retaining sin is to join the queue for the most horrific payout ever. Rom. 8:23, above, pictures man as “working at the job” of going to Hell, for “death” does not merely refer to the death of our human body, nor to some ceasing of one’s existence.

People talk of those who “take advantage of the system.” Many laugh at how much they have acquired without

earning a penny or being honestly eligible for such “winnings.” In so many ways, people train themselves to believe they can get away with practically anything! This deceptive training will land them in Hell, for sin pays wages to “do-nothings,” as well as to “all liars” (Rev.21:8) and corrupters of every sort.

With such a horrible picture, how can anyone win?! At the end of April, we remembered the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. “The woman at the well” had asked Jesus, “This well is deep and you have nothing to draw water with. How or where can you get living water!?” (Jn. 4:11). Jesus had just said to her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.” Rom. 6:23 that says “the wages of sin is death” also says “but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Jesus had said “If you knew the gift...and who!” The Gift and the Giver are one and the same, making it double-special!

The Risen Christ speaks to us in the last book of the Bible: Revelation. Chapter one is full of clear references to Himself. Yet these same Old Testament references are unquestionably connected to Almighty God—Jehovah, if you like. Chapter one speaks to “the seven churches of Asia Minor” (modern Turkey). These are each spoken to by the Risen Christ in chapters 2, 3. To all but the last (Laodicea), Jesus addresses them using various references to Him from chapter one. Laodicea historically existed as a city with a church. Yet, Laodicea may also specially refer to our present age. We might, therefore feel cheated that Jesus used no God-like reference to Himself in addressing them! To all seven churches, Jesus says “to him that overcomes,” then adds a tailor-made ending of blessing. But to Laodicea He says with pre-eminence, “To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne” (3:21). Jesus says to us all today, “I won. You can, too!” Go For It!

The Price of Gold

Just part of the global scam

Gabriel L. Mancino



Israel paid a terrible “price” for their golden idolatry! While Moses received The 10 Commandments, Israel had a lust-filled free-for-all party at the bottom of the mountain. They surely were “at the bottom!” What a horrible “exchange rate:” God’s solid-gold Foundation traded in for idolatry.

Man hasn’t learned; neither is he satisfied collapsing economies. Sin perverts virtually everything! Yet, God gives hope more solid than gold: “Where sin abounded, grace abounded even more!” but clarifies... “Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? Certainly not!” (Rom. 5:20; 6:1,2).

God has the hairs of our head numbered, knows the name of each star, and takes account of each sparrow that falls. Flawless bookkeeping! Yet, God’s main concern is that WE value what HE values most of all. He expressed it this way: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!” (Matt. 17:5).

Although God pre-eminently values His beloved Son, the Bible asks “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not, WITH HIM, freely give us all things?” (Rom. 8:32). 1 Peter 1:18-25 shines further light on this, saying:

“You were not redeemed [set free] by payment with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless, empty conduct handed down from your forefathers. But you were set free with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreknown and appointed before the foundation of the world. But He was manifested in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. You have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren. Therefore, love one another fervently with a pure

heart, having been born again—not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through God’s word which lives and remains unchanged forever. Yes, all flesh is like grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, but the word of the LORD endures forever. Now this is the word which by the Good News of the Gospel was preached to you.”

Peter’s “gold mine,” (above), presents two treasures: 1) God’s Great Gift to us through Jesus Christ exceeds any price tag, and 2) God’s word has no time restrictions, but is forever relevant and applicable.

The “King James” Bible had its 400th birthday this month. Noted atheists took the occasion, mocking both God and the Bible; foolishly placing them among fairy tales. (Ps.14:1) Peter disagrees with them, saying “We did NOT follow cleverly invented fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’ And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts” (2 Pet. 1:16-19).

Here are some Bible verses that speak of God’s word and God’s way as greater than gold: Ps. 19:9-11; Ps. 119:72, 126-128; Proverbs portrays Godly “wisdom” like a person calling to us and offering the greatest riches, as in 8:10,11, 18-21. Jesus encourages the spiritually rich who may be poor in earthly things (Rev. 2:9). He also warns against foolish focus on earthly riches, and not being “rich toward God” — (Lk. 12:15-21). Jesus also assures us that “treasures in heaven” cannot be stolen, cannot rust nor be moth-eaten. One of the world’s greatest kings, who built one of the Seven Wonders of the World, said “Amen!” to what I am telling you! He “trashed” his proud paganism and turned, whole-heartedly to God. (read it in Dan. 4).

We meet at Christ Church on the corner of Brent Street and Heriot Road in Hendon (NW4) at 5:45 pm Sundays. Nearest Tube: Hendon Central.