

## SPEAK WHAT YOU BELIEVE

Psalm 116:8—17 / 2 Corinthians 4:13

*"I believed and therefore I spoke"*. These words in Psalm 116 are couched in perhaps the gravest event in life—**facing death** (V. 8): *"for you have delivered my soul from death"*—read on through V17. Some of the highlights are *"I am greatly afflicted. I said in my haste, **all men are liars**"* (In other words: "men can't be trusted, they can't solve some problems"—so **believe and speak** until you hear from God. The importance of what we say is mentioned throughout the Bible—and there is the power of life or death in our words (**Prov. 18:21**); Jesus said we need to ask in prayer (**speak**) and faith in order to get our needs met. This passage ends with thanksgiving and calling upon the name of the Lord (V 17)—a name we can always trust. But there is more in Psalm 116.

In **verses 12—14** the Psalmist **spoke four things**, and Christians need to speak the same 4 things throughout their lives to maintain strong faith; to overcome difficulties and problems; and to grow into the person that lives and experiences God's favor—that ultimately will guarantee their membership in the Church of Philadelphia (five wise virgins of **Matthew 25**) who are caught up to heaven for the wedding feast. The term "Virgins" referred to believers in Christ, and 5 had enough oil (Holy Spirit) and were living kingdom principles, to go up to the wedding of the Bride—the other five were left behind. Becoming a Christian is the beginning, but we must always keep in mind the end of the journey—will we have the Holy Spirit active in our lives to qualify worthiness to be included in the wedding in the sky, and dwell forever with Jesus and our Heavenly Father? Now consider the 4 spoken items in **Psalm 116:12—14**.

**First:** *"What shall I render to the Lord (while) I am in the land of the living"* (still alive)? New believers are aware of what Jesus did for them, but some stop right there. They continue to think about the benefits God prepared for them: salvation, healing, deliverance, victory over temptation, provision, etc. (**Psalm 103**)—but don't change their habits and life-style. The important question (**to speak**) should be: **what can I do for the Lord while I am in the land of the living** (before I die or the Lord catches away the saints)?

We need to remember that part of confession and repentance involves changing masters. We must **speak** to renounce Satan, who ruled over fleshly desires and actions; and proclaim (**speak**) that Jesus will be our Lord and master—ruling over us by the Holy Spirit's teaching, guiding and empowering us with love, mercy and righteousness. Keep in mind that the purpose of redemption/salvation is to change us from the image of Satan into the image of Christ, who knew no sin, overcame every temptation and only said what His Heavenly Father told Him to say, and did what the Father told Him to do. God was pleased with everything Jesus said and did and so should we *strive to do what pleases God* (**Psalm 103:21**). It is interesting that this same Psalm that lays out all of God's benefits and blessings to humanity (**v.1—5**) also tells us how to qualify to receive them (**v. 17 & 18**) and ends with **v. 21**: *"Bless the Lord, all you His hosts, you ministers of His, who do His pleasure"*. What can we render to the Lord? We can frequently **speak to ourselves** that we will make the decisions in life—and carry them out—to be a true believer who **does God's pleasure**.

**Second:** *I will take up the cup of salvation* (which includes #3 and #4) but let us discuss the cup. This signifies resolve and requires **a lot of talking**—to ourselves, to God in prayer and worship, in teaching and witnessing; and in resisting Satan and demons in Spiritual warfare (**Eph. 6:10—18**). It means we are serious about our decision to renounce sin, ask for the free gift of salvation (**more speaking**), and begin a new life under a **new master. We took up the cup and intend to drink its contents**. We have no intention of changing the contents of the cup, we will consume the blessings God put in the cup and give thanks for our redemption. Our life style is part of the **contents of the cup of salvation**.

God intended that Adam and Eve would know **only good**. It was Satan who led them into questioning and disobeying God. It is Satan who inspires all evil, but the **contents of salvation's cup** will set us free from Satan's control **if we will digest the contents**—meaning live the life style of His kingdom. God is a far better master than Satan, He created us in His image and He wants our lives to exemplify His image. We who drink this cup let God change us from sinners to saints. God has done His part in redeeming us from the penalty of sin, and He is ready to help us 24/7—our part is to study God's Word and live by His principles. This requires **speaking**, and **If we talk the talk we can walk the walk!**

**Third:** *I will call upon the name of the Lord.* This is a call to prayer, and the most fruitful prayers are spoken **orally**. Maybe this is because thoughts can be changed before we speak or act, but spoken words cannot be recalled. I am reminded of the story, whether fiction or true, it makes a good point. In a small town an atheist lambasted God, Christians and the local pastor. Years later he gave his heart to Christ and asked the pastor for forgiveness. The pastor was willing to forgive, but he told the man his damage could not be reversed. He said go up to your highest window and empty a bag of feathers into the wind. Then go and collect every one of those feathers. The man said that would be impossible. The pastor replied: “exactly—and it is impossible to retrieve and reverse all the damage your words have done”. A closing thought about words from **Proverbs 18:21**: “*Death and life are in the power of the tongue*”.

Returning now to our third point: *calling upon the name of the Lord*, the Bible is filled with the admonition to call upon the Lord, to pray, to ask, to talk (and listen) to God. We need to reverse what we often do (try everything we know before we pray) and **speak to God first**. Calling upon God means that we believe He is the only one that can help us; that there are no other gods (note the little “g”) or sources of power; and that we believe **Psalms 37** is true—we can trust in God and He will not disappoint us. What we do is part of the **contents of the cup**.

**Fourth:** *I will pay my vows to the Lord.* **Ecclesiastes 5** warns us about speaking rashly (before we think things through), and that it is better not to make a vow than to make a vow and not keep it. We have already stated that when we confess (**speak**) our sins and ask (**speak**) the Lord to forgive us, we are also promising (**speaking**) to stop serving Satan and begin serving God. This promise is a **vow** to be kept throughout our Christian lives if we are to be ready to go when Jesus comes for His Bride. How important it is to believe the right things—and to **speak and act accordingly**. Living what we confess, and changing masters is also part of the **contents of the cup**.

I have shared a number of key Bible verses to help you understand Bible principles; read the verses many times and meditate on how they can be applied in your life. Throughout these **meditations** I have shared personal experiences to prove that Bible principles are still in effect today. Let me share another experience. When I was 23 or 24 and teaching and coaching, deer season arrived and several teachers went with me to unfamiliar hunting grounds. I parked the car near several trails and different teachers went different ways. My trail went up a mountain side to a high ridge overlooking a small river a mile or so below. I sat down to rest and lost track of time enjoying the breeze and the scenic view before me. Suddenly I realized it was starting to get dark, and I was several miles from the car. I jumped up and began to run in the direction of the trail. My left foot stepped into a hole and I fell heavily to the ground and there was immediate severe pain in my ankle. I could not waste time so I got up and took another step and fell again. What a predicament that was, but I didn't have a jacket or food or water—I had to get to the trail and to the car. I said to the Lord: “You know my situation, I can't spend the night here, and I have only a few minutes to get to the trail. Pain or no pain I have to run to the trail while I can still see to find it. Help me.” Then I got up and took a few steps, then I began to run, and suddenly I realized there was no pain in my ankle. I found the trail and under the trees it was too dark to see the trail, so I raised my arms to feel branches if I moved either way off the trail, and kept hurrying down the mountain side. I heard my friends honking the horn ten minutes before I got to the car. I drove home without pain. I went to classes and football practice without any swelling or pain. In that emergency I had to make a choice, then speak in faith, and finally take action—and God answered my prayer. **Mighty Man or woman to be**—God is alive and will do the same for you.