

EVERY CHRISTIAN'S TESTIMONY (Isa 12.1, 2) CBC-31 Jan 2021

Your “personal testimony” as a Christian is unique in biographical details, but respecting God’s grace, our testimonies are exactly the same! We all had the same fundamental problem, change of our relation to God, faith, courage, strength, song—because we have the same God and salvation!

- 1 And in that day thou shalt say,
O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me,
Thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.
- 2 Behold, God *is* my salvation;
I will trust, and not be afraid:
For the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and *my* song;
He also is become my salvation.

The Lord is my complete salvation!

I. The Time of This Testimony: NOW! (1a)

Dispensationalists rob us of these verses by teaching they are meant only for Jewish people during a future, earthly millennium (e.g. MacArthur SB). They miserably fail to grasp the OT/NT relation as promises made/kept.

The number of quotations from and allusions to Isaiah that appear in the NT is striking. . . . About twenty times Isaiah is cited by name, and these quotations come from twelve different chapters spread throughout the book. . . . This use of the book of Isaiah draws attention to the continuity of biblical revelation between OT and NT. Jesus’ own public ministry began with a sermon on Isaiah 61 in which he made the declaration: ‘Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing’ (Luke 4:21). Clearly he set the interpretative model for exegesis of the OT by the teaching he gave to his disciples, as he instructed them about everything written concerning him in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms (Luke 24:44) (Allan Harman, “Isaiah,” FOBC, 32).

Isaiah’s prophecy here is already/not yet, inaugurated, not consummated. Since Christ’s first coming, multitudes have so testified, but there will be greater praise by more people in the New Creation after Christ’s return.

“In that day” refers to “the day when the LORD will have constituted a worldwide people as his own and when his King reigns” (Motyer, TOTC, in loc.). These two are prophesied (Isa 11.10; 9.6) and started with the first coming of Christ and the conversion of the Gentiles (Matt 28.18; Acts 2.36). Paul cited Isaiah 11.10 in support of his missionary labors (Rom 15.12), and this applies to the spread of the gospel throughout the world ever since.

II. The Substance of This Testimony: PRAISE TO THE LORD! (1b)

True Christian testimony is focused upon the Lord and His great work for us and in us. The right perspective is that we are part of *His* story for *His* praise, not vice versa. Our biographies are incidental to the main point: the Lord is my salvation! Consider what He has done for me and still does! John 3.30. Let your testimony swell with praise to the Savior!

III. The Conversion in This Testimony: FROM CONDEMNATION TO CONSOLATION (1bc)

Note three things in the text: the reality of God’s anger, God’s anger turned away, God’s ministry of comfort to me.

- “Thou wast angry with me.” Yes! Because God is holy and I was wicked (Psa 7.11b).
- “Thine anger is turned away.” Christ crucified is the *propitiation* (wrath-averting sacrifice, 1 Jn 2.2). A change in my relation to God.

God is the same. His love is the same. His wrath is the same. His mercy is the same. His justice is the same, and that forever; but we, changing, are cast sometimes under the effects of His love and sometimes under the effects of His wrath. We are sometimes under the saddest droppings of His justice, and sometimes under the sweetest influences of His mercy (Edward Pearce, “A Beam of Divine Glory,” cf. 1674).

- “Thou comfortest me.” The gift of the Spirit to God’s elect, the blessedness purchased for us by the blood of Christ, now applied.

IV. The Confidence in This Testimony: GOD IS FOR ME IN PARTICULAR (2)

Now “God is *my* salvation (2a), “is become my salvation” (2d—implied change of my relation to Him). “God himself is the source and the effecting of salvation: he is so (2a) because he wills to become so (2d)” (Harman, in loc.). Not that He *becomes* anything in Himself but He changes us and our relation to Him (enmity to amity) while He remains unchanged. “Salvation is of the Lord” (Jonah 2.9). It is His glory to save whomever He pleases—He can do that and actually does do that (Exod 33.19; Psa 115.3). “**By His doing you are in Christ Jesus**, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, so that, just as it is written, ‘LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD’” (1 Cor 1.30, 31 NA95).

As a saved person, he has:

- A sense of assurance. Reveals the inward state of his heart. “I will trust, and not be afraid,” beautiful, links reliance upon the Lord with deliverance from fear. Heb. for “trust” in Psa 56.3; 91.2; Heb. for “fear” in Psa 27.1. All true Christians enjoy some assurance of salvation because they have some reliance on the Lord.
- A Savior to celebrate. Emphasizes the outward state of his case. “For the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and *my* song.” Instead of saying “I will be strong and sing,” the Lord’s name is more conspicuous here. “I may tremble on the Rock, but the Rock never trembles under me!” A true Christian’s religious affections are not the measure of his security in Christ.

If this is YOUR testimony, give thanks to God! He saved/saves/shall save you. You contribute nothing to His saving work to make it effective. It is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. PTL!

If this is NOT YOUR testimony, repent and believe the gospel, and it will be. You will then join us singing, “The Lord is my complete salvation.” Amen. Ω