

“APPEARANCE OF FAILURE!”

By Mary Mayko



Luke 23:33-35 KJV “And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand and the other on the left. Then said Jesus, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” And they parted His raiment, and cast lots. And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided Him, saying, He saved others; let Him save Himself, if He be Christ, the chosen of God.”

“Things are not always as they seem!” This is a phrase we often hear that contains much more truth than we may imagine! Another saying is, ***“What you see is what you get!”*** Well, that statement is often incorrect! We usually either get a lot more than we can see, or, there are some things not revealed in what you see!

Some things we receive whether we expect them or not and they can be extremely unpleasant! Bitter disappointment fills our heart and if we are not watchful that can cause us many painful days! On the other hand, we may become the recipient of some divine blessing with benefits that amaze us!

In the Bible many people had the *appearance of failure!* Yet God used the adversities in their lives to fulfill a plan He had in progress! Think of the lives of Abraham and Sarah and their apparent failure to bear a child, but God gave them Isaac! Joseph’s dreams appeared impossible, especially when he was falsely accused and thrown into prison! But God placed him in a position of power and used him to protect Abraham’s descendants! The Israelites must have looked at Moses and the forty years of wandering as a complete waste! Yet, we see Joshua leading their children to victory in the Promised Land! ***When all seems like an impossibility and complete failure,*** He sometimes does wonderful things that no man can take credit for!

2 Cor.4:7 KJV “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”

In the days of the Crucifixion, Jesus was mocked and beaten, then hung on a Cross! ***If anything ever had the appearances of failure,*** that awful day was surely one of them!

When He died that afternoon, a sudden darkness covered what an instant before had been a bright sunny day! The disciples must have run in terror, thinking their

Messiah had utterly failed to keep His Promises! The scene at the Cross had all the earmarks of complete failure!

Suddenly on that Sunday morning, proof of the greatest victory was evident in the Resurrection of our LORD Jesus Christ! What a miracle! For the disciples, what a fright as well as delight when they saw for themselves the Risen Savior! What a dramatic demonstration that “Appearances are not always as they seem!” The appearance of failure was now the reality of victory!

What about your life? Are you sometimes overwhelmed by apparent failures by what you have or have not done? We need to be reminded that God looks at His long range plans for us and once He has begun a good work in us, He cannot fail, no matter how things seem to be!

Phil.1:6 KJV “Being confident in this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Christ.”

There are many people and difficulties in life we have no control over. As we call upon His name to help us, we can trust Him to give us strength and grace to overcome. Each time we look to Him for help, *although nothing seems to change that picture of failure,* He is still working all things together for our good because we love Him! (Rom.8:28)

Take courage in His Promises, not the appearances!



THE RING SAYS IT ALL!

Rev. J.Kehl Golding copyright 2005. Excerpt from “Echoes for Today’s Listening”

“With this ring I thee wed”.....

What beautiful happy thoughts these words bring to mind. Thoughts of belonging, love, trust, security, and the commitment of one to another; the ring as a symbol of that bond, or, do these words bring grief, betrayal, lack of trust and fear to mind?

The ring has long been a symbol of love, belonging, accomplishment, and even authority.

We watch our young people excitedly design their high school ring, the stone with its color, symbols, engravings, and then wait patiently for its’ arrival. It proudly announces the school’s name and the year of their accomplishment of Graduation.

We cheer our favorite NFL Team through the Season, win or lose until they are on the top of the division and finally ready for the Big One! Then we watch as they proudly receive and display their “Super Bowl Ring”. For the rest of their life they will treasure that ring and all it stands for!

In ancient times, the signet ring was as good as a personal signature. It had a raised surface with the King’s emblem on it, and it would be used with soft wax to seal letters or official documents. The one using this signet ring had the King’s authority and power.

In our text today, Haggai 2:23, his message to the people is to quit worrying about circumstances and rather trust Him, and he directs this to the leader Zerubbabel , a good leader, but one who allowed problems and resistance to hinder him. He was easily discouraged and almost hopeless. He needed motivation and encouragement as his work had come to a grinding halt.

It is to this man, leader of these people, God speaks these words. “I will make you like My signet ring, for I have chosen you.”

“For I have chosen thee”.... What sweeter words could a child of God hear than these? To know He has placed His great hand of love on you, His eye of mercy rests on you and you are graven on the palms of His hands! Isa.49:16.

You may be thinking, “Not me! The things I have done, the fear and unbelief in my heart and all the times I have failed Him! Beloved, notice who is named here! Zerubbabel, the very one we just talked about, the one called to lead but was easily discouraged, hindered by circumstances and had completely stopped his work on the rebuilding of the Temple!

But our God is not easily discouraged. He says, “I have chosen you, and will make you like My signet ring.” If you’ll but come to Him, He will show you what he can do for you and with you! Jesus said, “Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” Matt.6:33

Beloved, “Snuggle in!” Become His signet, allow Him to use you to show His love, His power and His saving grace to this needy, hurting world!

A CHANGE FOR THE BETTER!

Mary Mayko 2004 Excerpt from "The Overflowing Cup"

Many say they want to go to Heaven, but fail to make the changes needed to get there! We must be Born Again, just as Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3:3(LB) "Jesus replied, 'With all earnestness I possess I tell you this: Unless you are Born Again, you can never get into the Kingdom of God.'" How *can* you be born again? In the same chapter in v.15 He gives the answer! "So anyone who believes in Me will have Eternal Life." What a change for the better!

We are going through constant changes in our lives, although at times it *seems* nothing is happening! Our minds definitely need daily renewal and growth to live a full and peaceful life. Originally, we were made to live forever, but sin entered in and now our bodies grow old and eventually we will pass on. We may become injured, get a disease, or have troubles that seem to take our zest for life. Our thoughts often reflect our emotions and allow our feelings to control our way of life. What can we do when all these negatives come at us like a flood?

Many people resist changes of any kind with great determination, yet feel degraded or less effective as a result of their resistance! Some believe changes are a detriment rather than an asset! Have you ever considered the recycling process? Often it includes such changes as bleaching, crushing, soaking, pounding and cutting to make something new out of an old product! God has a recycling plan for each of us with an end result in mind!
He often puts us *through the mill* so to speak in order to change us into His Likeness!

He knows our minds need to be renewed, our emotions can stand a good soothing, and our spirits must be restored day by day. One day our bodies will die, but that is not the end of us, for God will recycle them also on our Resurrection Day! (1 Cor.15:51-52) We will be changed in the twinkling of an eye! What an exciting Promise! When Christ rose from the grave, He became the First Fruits of all who will rise on that Glorious day!

When we get disgusted with the way our bodies are hurting us, take time to praise the LORD for the new ones we will have in Glory! Changes in our lives are in harmony with God's plan for us and are to be accepted without complaint! (How we fail to live up to this!) He also works on certain areas of our lives that need to change so they line up with His Word. He will not allow us to be *comfortable* with them until we submit them into His hands! *Let the LORD recycle you!*

Rom 12:2 KJV "And do not be conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

"Dear LORD, help us to accept the changes You have for our lives. Your love for us will not allow us to become stagnant in our walk with You without being challenged!"

**Thank You for the Holy Spirit who works mightily in us to make us more like You!
Amen!"**