

## Give Me Liberty and Give Me Death (to sin and self)

After a difficult day yesterday, that was a culmination of a difficult period of three days, a friend offered a gift intended to provide rest and relief. God provided a number of friends throughout the day to offer encouragement and prayer. We must acknowledge that serving in God's army will necessitate time of rest, and then we will fully appreciate the hand of our Father in providing all of our need.

I used to think that Paul's words in the following verse referred to material needs, but I have come to see that the needs are far more. ***"And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."*** (Philippians 4:19 NKJV) So I am truly grateful that my Father knows my needs even before I ask for them. Jesus said it this way, ***"And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him."*** (Matthew 6:7-8 NKJV)

While it is obvious that in times of duress and incessant activity we need rest, it is not so obvious that in the normal everyday affairs we need rest as well. Miles Stanford reminded me of this in my daily quiet time this morning: Exhaustive effort brings home the necessity of strengthening rest. The believer will not be ready to enter into his spiritual rest until he is utterly worn out by his unsuccessful efforts to conquer sin and the old man.

There is no rest for the "wretched man" of Romans 7—that struggle must lead to the rest of Romans 8. ***"Grace is sufficient for favorable circumstances, but they are by far the most trying (spiritually) to the believer. There is an easy way of going on in worldliness, and there is nothing more sad than the quiet comfortable Christian going on day by day, apart from dependence upon the Lord. "It must be as with Israel and the manna; there must be the daily gathering and daily dependence upon God. If circumstances come between our hearts and God, we are powerless. If the Lord Jesus is nearer, circumstances will not hinder our joy in God"***

***"The heart of man naturally seeks rest, and seeks it here. Now, there is no rest to be found here for the believer; but it is written, 'There remaineth, therefore, a rest to the people of God' (Hebrews 4:9).***

***"To know this is both full of blessing and full of sorrow: sorrow to the flesh; because it is always seeking its rest here, it has always to be disappointed; blessing to the spirit, because the spirit, being born of God, can only rest in God's rest, as it is said, 'If they shall enter into My rest' (Heb. 4:5). What God desires for us is to bring us into the enjoyment of all that which He Himself enjoys." –John Darby***

***"Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him" (Ps. 37:7).***<sup>1</sup>

Resting in the Lord means exactly what it says. It is having the experiential knowledge that my best efforts will fall hopelessly short and having the faith to continue walking in the Spirit that made me free from the law of sin and death. On a day when America celebrates its political freedom, ***we need to celebrate our spiritual freedom by not going back to bondage to sin or self. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage."*** (Galatians 5:1 NKJV)

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<sup>1</sup> Stanford, M. J. (2002). *Complete Works of Miles J. Stanford*. Galaxie Software.