



The Tri-Cities Edifier

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More With Us Than With Them

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One of my favorite Old Testament stories is in [2 Kings 6:8-23](#). It tells of a time when a king of Syria once again went out to battle against Israel. The Syrian king would always be trying to make raids and ambush the Israelites but Elisha would tell the king of Israel where to go and where not to go. That really upset the Syrian king and when he found out that it was Elisha in Dothan he surrounded the city intent on killing him.

There are multiple things about this story that make this particularly one of my favorites and I'll let you read the entire story to see the inspiring and humorous elements of what took place but I just want to remind us this morning of probably the most important element. "Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." ([2 Kings 6:16](#))

Elisha's servant went out and quickly realized that they were surrounded and was greatly distressed. Who wouldn't be? They were surrounded and he knew exactly why. Elisha not only told him what you read above from v.16 but then Elisha asked of God to "open his eyes that he may see. So the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha." ([2 Kings 6:17](#)) It would really only take one angel to defeat this army but the young man saw a mountain full.

There's a lot of turmoil in this world on a constant basis. Sometimes it is closer to home and events like what is going on in different parts of our nation cause some unrest among brethren. The feeling that we are surrounded by evil on all sides weighs heavy on us. And we are surrounded by evil by the way, that's true. But... "Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them!"

I am not a prophet like Elisha and I cannot even begin to tell you the slightest hint of what God has planned and is doing. But I believe God has given us the knowledge of these events in Scripture to tell us that He has all things under his control and we need not fret. Let's go through this week seeking to SEE God's presence in our lives and around us each day.

Seemed Like Idle Tales

Leland Ping

Paul explained that the gospel would mean different things to different people. To those who believe it as truth, it's a source of power and wisdom by which a person governs his life. To those who refuse to believe it and who perish due to their lack of faith, the apostle says that the cross' message is foolishness (1 Corinthians 1:18). The core message of the gospel is salvation which comes not simply through Jesus' death, but through His powerful and miraculous resurrection. Without that resurrection, our efforts in doing God's will are "in vain" (1 Corinthians 15:14). After Jesus was raised from the dead, a group of women went to the eleven remaining apostles to share with them the exciting news that their friend Jesus was no longer dead but was now alive. The Bible says, "their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them" (Luke 24:11).

There are countless observations that one can make about this section of scripture, but one that most definitely should be made is the lack of faith of these eleven men. The twelve apostles had been the closest of friends with Jesus. They had spent countless days with Him for over three years. Three of the twelve (Peter, James, John) had an even closer relationship than did the other nine. Yet, in spite of their repeated promises to never abandon their Master and Friend, they all did exactly that (Matthew 26:56). Furthermore, if anyone should have known of God's plan to redeem mankind

through the resurrection of the Christ, it should have been the apostles. Yet, it was these men who heard what the women reported and thought they were telling stories!

Whether the gospel is powerful or not and whether or not the account of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection are like idle tales is entirely up to each person. In Luke 24, the women were convinced but the men were not. Today, one person who fully believes in Jesus and has rendered his life obedient to Him might sit next to man who has no desire to consider God's word as a valuable thing to consider and chooses instead to view it as folklore and idle tales. It's also important for us to be reminded that, no matter how faithful we become and no matter how close we get to Jesus, it's possible for us to go "backward with our faith" like the apostles seemed to do. The best thing for us to do is to daily consider Christ's powerful words and communicate directly with the Father, asking Him for the strength to always see the words of His message as they are supposed to be seen — powerful and life changing! *Lake Elsinore Bulletin*

LOVE...THINKS NO EVIL...BELIEVES ALL THINGS

by Al Diestelkamp

Have you ever been accused of something of which you were not guilty? It hurts, doesn't it? And no matter what you say, the accuser isn't convinced. Such is sometimes the case with the accusation of racism. It seems that some people see a racist around every corner (or in the case of the church, in every pew). The charge of racism is a serious charge. It's an accusation of sin. If there is evidence of bigotry, it needs to be exposed so that repentance can occur. If there is no basis for the charge, it is an unloving act. In the Spirit-inspired list of what love is—and is not (1 Cor. 13)—there are at least two characteristics that exclude false accusations:

Love "thinks no evil" (v.5). In his commentary, Adam Clarke suggests this means "Believes no evil where no evil exists." He says, "The original implies that he does not invent or devise evil; or does not reason on any particular act or word so as to infer evil from it." *Clarke's Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 269.2.

Love "believes all things" (v.7). About this phrase, Clarke says that the loving person, "Is ever ready to believe the best of every person, and will credit no evil of any but on the most positive evidence." *ibid.*, p. 268.

Actually, it is not in the interest of promoting racial equality to make unfounded accusations or to *assume* that people are bigots. These only make matters worse and will inevitably delay the desired results.

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