

Introduction for June 27, 2010

While meditating upon the Word of God concerning revival and reformation I was delightfully brought back to the book of Zechariah. In my study I was reminded again that Zechariah 9-14 is quoted more in the passion narratives than any other Old Testament texts. Reading afresh chapters 7 and 8 quickly turned my thoughts to Romans 14 and 15. It is no coincidence as we begin the study of Luke's gospel in August that Zechariah will be referenced and Romans incorporated. My plan, God willing, is to finish our study in Romans as we commence our study in Luke and consider Zechariah concerning revival and reformation. So how does all of this fit together? A good question! We know that Luke was with Paul in Rome and travelled with him to Corinth from which Romans was written (Acts 16:11f). Luke attended him while in prison in Rome (II Timothy 4:11). What a remarkable ensemble of texts!

As we continue to face challenging, and at times, disquieting, issues and situations in our nation and as we continue to age as a church (grow up in Christ), Zechariah, Luke and Romans will become (or at least I pray they will become) increasingly precious and stabilizing in our lives. As the gospel is preached and the sovereign majesty of God is heralded from this sacred desk, I am confident that our great and awesome God will keep and sustain us by His grace so that we might weather the storms of life and engage our culture with the gospel. I believe these days will be good days but hard days. There will be grand opportunities for the church to proclaim the gospel in both word and deed. As we grow as a church, children will be born both physically and spiritually, young men and women will begin their lives together in marriage, some will remain single, families will be raised, some will suffer with sickness, others with loss of work. Some will endure the heartache of broken relationships; many will face great disappointments, while many will be blessed in remarkable ways. Some will be called home to be with the Lord (which is the most extraordinary blessing), yet we pray that in all of this, Christ will be exalted, His grace magnified in our lives, and the process of sanctification will continue to the glory of God. Luke's gospel, the prophecy of Zechariah and Paul's letter to Rome will be our constant companions and friends in this journey. What a journey it is and what a great Savior we worship and serve!