Jesus, With Me

 Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: **10** For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city. Acts 18:9-10 (KJV)

 In one of the devotions that Brother Scott Williams passes on to me, the writer said that Jesus was not just **near** to us but **here** with us. That is a wonderful truth. Close is good sometimes but does not help all the time. If I need a doctor in Snead it may not help if there is one in Oneonta. Some years ago there was a man driving a car hauler from Boaz to Birmingham. As he drove near Douglas he began to have a hurting in his chest. By the time he reached Snead he was deathly sick. He stopped at the crossing and asked where he mind find a doctor’s office. The attendant did not know so he tried to get back to his truck. A lady who overheard his question followed him to the truck and told him she would lead him to the doctor’s office. Before he could get there he had to pull into a parking lot. He tried to get out of the truck but could only fall in the parking lot. The doctor’s office was only a short distance from that parking lot and someone got the doctor immediately. Soon he was stabilized enough to fly him to Caraway Hospital. This man was having a serious heart attack and near wasn’t good enough. He needed a doctor who was present.

 We need Jesus the same way. Jesus is a very present help in the time of our need. Now to be present is not always helpful. My granddaughter, Sterling, has reached the age where she doesn’t appreciate the same things that we “dumber” adults value. So she may be in the same room with us but she usually has headphones on her head and she is of little help if she is needed. You would need to scream real loud to even get her attention. Well that type of presence is not very helpful. No, what we need is someone who is present and also compassionate. The man who had the heart attack may have had plenty of folks present but at least one was compassionate enough to seek help. Jesus is present “I am with thee” and he also cares for us. He looks on us with compassion. Our hurts are his; our sorrows are his; and our concerns are his.

 Well there is one other thing that is needed in the Lord’s presence. That is ability. Using my former example, the man having the heart attack would still have been looking death in the eye if he had not had someone present who could get him stabilized. He had someone who was there; someone who cared; and someone who was able to help. In Jesus we have all of that, he is not just near but he is here. He not only is here but he cares and will provide our needs. Yes, it is a blessed truth and divine encouragement to hear Jesus say to us “I am with thee.”

Yours in Christ,

Brother Randy Burtram