

A Call to Watch and Pray

In Total Eclipse Anne Dillard writes: "The Ring Nebula, in the constellation Lyra, looks, through binoculars, like a smoke ring. It is a star in the process of exploding. Light from the explosion first reached the earth in 1054, it was a supernova then, and so bright it shone in the daytime. Now it is not so bright, but it is still exploding. It expands at the rate of seventy million miles a day. It is interesting to look through binoculars at something expanding seventy million miles a day. It does not budge. It's apparent size does not increase. Photographs of the Ring Nebula taken fifteen years ago seem identical to photographs of it taken yesterday."

Huge happenings are not always visible to the naked eye---especially in the spiritual realm. At times this nebula resembles the process of prayer. We sometimes pray and pray and seemingly see no change in the situation. But that is only true from our perspective! If we could see from heaven's standpoint, we would know all that God is doing, and intending to, do in our lives. We would see God working in hearts in ways we cannot know. We would see God orchestrating circumstances that we know nothing about. We would see a galaxy of details being set in place for the moment when God brings the answer to fulfillment.

Mark 14:32-42

1st Mark 14:38 "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

The temptation that Jesus was speaking about is the temptation to be *unfaithful* in the face of threatening circumstances. This is the greatest challenge that we face as a church, and as individual Christians, in this sinful and evil world in which we live. And it will continue to become more and more difficult as the return of Jesus Christ draws near.

Psalm 31:23-24 "Oh, love the LORD, all you His saints! For the LORD preserves the faithful, and fully repays the proud person. Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all you who hope in the LORD."

Revelation 2:10 Jesus told the church at Smyrna, the church under persecution: "Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life."

2nd Psalm 51:12 "Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit."

If we as individual Christians, and collectively as a church, are to remain faithful to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ it will not be in the power of our own strength. It will only come as our spirit communes with the Holy Spirit of God. And then, by His power, we are transformed into willing vessels to be used by our Lord.

Romans 8:14 "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."

John 14:16-17 & 26 Jesus said: "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever---the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you...But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I have said to you."

In His Love,
Joel