

"A Time to Laugh" 29 JUNE 2016

Ecclesiastes 3:1 For every *thing there is* a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: Including according to verse 4, "a time to laugh..." Tonight we shall go aside somewhat in our study of the Book of Job. Chapter 18 is where we have come to: it is stupendously sad. Probably you have heard, and heard correctly concerning the death of our first President, George Washington. His friends, in an effort to make him well bled him down to weakness and death--zealous medical ignorance. This is what Chapter 18 is about and we may deal with it somewhat.

But I want to go aside from that chapter. Turn to Luke 6:20,21. Here is "*The Sermon on the Plain.*"

Listen to Randy Alcorn's comments on LAUGHTER  
(p. 231-235 50 Days of HEAVEN, Tyndale publishers)

My goal in reading this to you is more about increasing your faith than it is prompting you to laugh.

We have, do we not, as believers in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ--ENEMIES.

Skip down in Luke 6:27,28. This kind of love never happens in merely our own strength. That kind of love is the expression of supernatural character. So let us consider the great chapter on Christian Love in I Corinthians 13.

Charity and its Fruits: *That grace or holiness, which is the effect of the ordinary influence of the Spirit of God in the hearts of the saints, is that wherein the spiritual image of God consists; and not in these extraordinary gifts of the Spirit--*

The spiritual image of God does not consist in having a power to work miracles (what a variety of miracles seem to have occurred at Corinth), and foretell future events, but it consists in

being holy, as God is holy: in having a holy and divine principle in the heart, influencing us to holy and heavenly lives.

Extraordinary gifts, do not necessarily confirm that those who exercise those extraordinary gifts are exceptionally godly people with deep spiritual roots. Balaam was a wicked man and yet for a brief time had extraordinary spiritual gifts; this is true of Saul too--"is Saul among the prophets?". And what of Judas? And finally what of the man of sin: II Thessalonians 2:9.

Extraordinary gifts do not necessarily require any character in order to exercise them: Acts 5:15. We would naturally think a great deal more of Jonah's preaching than a house wife's happy disposition under a heavy load of tasks, but God does not so estimate things.