

You are God's Masterpiece



For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works,
(Ephesians 2:10a EHV).

Hug-In-A-Mug MAY 2022 VOL. 73

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast (Ephesians 2: 8-9, KJV).

.... And this leads us right into the theme of our up-coming Convention 2022, reflected today in my chosen key word:

.... *we are God's WORKMANSHIP*

"Grace be to you, and peace..." as I boldly greet you with the Apostle Paul's greeting to his people of Ephesus, in his very short, but action-packed six chapters, the book of **Ephesians**. And I would put good money on the fact 99.5% of you shut your eyes and recited it. SO, I beg you to re-read the two verses above, phrase by phrase, careful attention to punctuation; unpack it, breathe, and pretend it is " in Paul's voice to You! "

In my priceless, mint-conditioned, second-hand store, Smith's Bible Dictionary, A.J. Holman & Co., Philadelphia, vintage 1823, the definition of "workmanship" is simply: **work, workers art**. It is referenced only four times in the Bible, three in The Old Testament, and one being our Eph 2:10, the New Testament. It was my son's Confirmation verse, so we have had it framed on the wall for decades. All this warmed my heart, because nothing has really changed much in 190 years, according to Smith, then.

Paul's theme, his preaching in three years with his people there, was election by God's grace, justification by grace alone, and the mystery of Christ revealed, and unity in Christ's body.

Grace alone. Faith in the Triune God. Nothing of our own. "*volition*." {Latin: will, choice, or one's desire} I am, in the same breath, under a ten-day, sort of post-Easter fog of humility and wonderment. And I pray, it doesn't go away very soon. For who????...can come to the footstool of the throne of God, having woven one's way through seven weeks of Lent, the power of Maundy Thursday, the supper, followed by the pain and humility, pure horror of the crucifixion of Good Friday, and the subsequent rolling away of the stone; news that rumbled through the hillsides then, to give us the Joy and Halleluiahs on Easter Morn! All good news for me? For us? How absolutely humbling, awesome in every way, and "heart rendering," as in opening our eyes to The Truth and The Way. He Is Risen Indeed!

In His service, as God's workmanship, don't mind me, but I am excited to convene with hundreds of brothers and sisters in the faith come late June. And now that deadlines are leaning heavy on all our shoulders, we can muster the troops, gird our loins,* and set sights on what promises to be a great and grand culmination of The Goods News. {Ref. * I was raised by a father with whom I shoveled sawdust, to heat our two-story grand old home, from a very early age, and he would quote that old phrase to con me into helping. I never questioned quite what that meant, until I was much older. (**gird**) means to prepare oneself with strength & power for action. Our (**loins**) are indeed the vertebrate part of our bodies down our spines, ribs to hip bones, believed to be "the seat of our physical strength and core power"

We will come prepared, with corporate strength, ready for action. And I know we shall REJOICE in the core-power of our cumulative Faith & Grace. We shall march, sing, clap, process, wander, hug, squeal, laugh, rejoice, and sing our hearts out...reflecting in tiny mirrors, under subtle candlelight at the tables, reflections of the people we proclaim to be: *proud people of mission hearts, doing His good work*.

We are God's Masterpiece...look closely: He holds us in His Hands

Once more then: by grace ...through faith...not of yourselves...the gift of God...not of works...lest any boast.