

'In God We Trust'

One film that I always associate with this time of the year, and in particular with Christmas, is "Miracle on 34th Street". And in that film is the reminder of the motto of the USA: "In God We Trust".

The Department of the Treasury for the United States in their factsheet "currency and coins", records,
The motto IN GOD WE TRUST was placed on United States coins largely because of the increased religious sentiment existing during the Civil War. Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase received many appeals from devout persons throughout the country, urging that the United States recognize the Deity on United States coins.

"In God We Trust"

Our Verse for 2010 is a reminder of this truth ... In God we trust ...
'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty.

"This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty.

The people of God who had returned to Judea from exile

were being oppressed by neighbouring nations. As a result, the people were discouraged and they let the Temple lie in ruins.

This vision affirms that through his Spirit, God would enable Zerubbabel and Jeshua to rebuild the Temple.

Jeshua and Zerubbabel would have success in the rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple, not by their own force or strength, but because of the presence of God's empowering Spirit

As the vision unfolds you hear the question ...

*What are you, O mighty mountain?
Before Zerubbabel
you will become
level ground.*

The New Living Translation puts it like this ...
Nothing, not even a mighty mountain, will stand in Zerubbabel's way; it will become a level plain before him!

This is a powerful picture that points to this great truth that faith in God enables his servants to overcome seemingly impossible obstacles

Such is the certainty of God's purposes that this particular vision concludes:
And when Zerubbabel sets the final stone of the Temple in place, the people will shout: 'May God bless it! May God bless it!' "

'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty.

This is a truth that I often rehearse, particularly on a Sunday. In fact I use this truth in three different ways. I praise God that it is not by might or power, but by his Spirit. I remind myself that it does not depend on me, but on God. And I let Satan know that my trust is in God.

My focus is not to be my ability or lack of it. My focus is to be the Lord and his ability. It is the Lord **Almighty** who speaks. It is he who speaks to Zerubbabel.

***'Not by might nor by power,
but by my Spirit,'
says the LORD
Almighty.***

This is a truth we need to remember as a fellowship.
This is a truth we need to rehearse together.
It does not depend upon us.

It is not how large or small a membership that we have.
It is not how talented or gifted the membership is.
In fact it is not about our abilities ...
It is about God!

We need to affirm, "In God We trust".
We need to work this out in our life together.
This means relying and depending upon God.
This means expressing our dependence in corporate prayer.
This is surely the something of the significance of our week of prayer.

God's people were reminded:
*You are a people holy to the LORD your God.
The LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples
on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession.
The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you
for you were the fewest of all peoples.
But it was because the LORD loved you
and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers
that he brought you out with a mighty hand
and redeemed you from the land of slavery,
from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.
Know therefore that the LORD your God is God;
he is the faithful God,
keeping his covenant of love
to a thousand generations
of those who love him
and keep his commands.*

The need to rely wholly upon God was a lesson Gideon was taught.
In fact he was taught this truth in a very dramatic manner.
God whittled his army down that God might have the glory.

***'Not by might nor by power,
but by my Spirit,'
says the LORD
Almighty.***

This is a truth that you need to remember personally.
The Apostle Paul reminded the Christians in Corinth:
*It is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ.
He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us,
and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit,
guaranteeing what is to come.*
2 Corinthians 1:21-22

In the same letter Paul gave this assurance:
*Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed,
we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven,
not built by human hands.
Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose
and has given us the Spirit as a deposit,
guaranteeing what is to come.*

In his letter to the Christians in Philippi, Paul writes ...
*Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—
not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—
continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,
for it is God who works in you to will and to act
according to his good purpose.*

It is God!

But that doesn't mean we are inactive.
it doesn't mean I can come unprepared to preach
It didn't mean Zerubbabel didn't have to lead and to build.
You are to work out your salvation.

In God I trust.
In God we trust.
For it is God who ...
This must be more than our motto.
It must be the reality by which I live daily.
As I work out my salvation – as I live for him.