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Dear Friends in the Faith:

Just before this photo was taken (8/5/2021), Buddy suddenly jumped up on the piano bench. It was as though he wanted to be in the picture also! He was welcome, of course.

I have a story about this piano that may be of some interest. As many of you know I began holding evangelistic meetings in churches when I was 18 years old. One of those early meetings was at Indio, California, here in the desert. Back then a couple songs I played as special numbers were "The Jericho Road" and "Keep on the Firing Line." Some may remember those songs. About 30 years later that church had this piano for sale. Desiring to have a grand piano (to replace the spinet we had) we purchased this piano and it has been in the living room ever since—the *same* piano I played during those meetings when I was 18!



Some weeks ago many of you received a gift copy of my new 96-page book **MUST WOMEN BE SILENT IN THE CHURCH?** No one was obligated in any way to give, but one very generous offering came in, and with other miscellaneous offerings—large and small—I am pleased to report that all needs for this project have been supplied. For any who do not have this book, you may request a gift copy or, with your request, send an offering in any amount.

A number of very fine letters have been received, agreeing with my defense of women in ministry. There were also letters from Christian people who were disappointed in it. Admittedly, the subject is controversial and not everyone comes to the same conclusion. Fine people sometimes disagree.

I am thinking just now of how Paul had a serious disagreement with Peter, considered him a *hypocrite*, and *rebuked* him! (Gal. 2:11-13). But they were friends and brothers in Christ. Peter referred to him as "our *beloved* brother Paul" (2 Peter 3:15).

In another incident, Paul disagreed with Barnabas about including John Mark as part of their ministry team. "The *contention* was so *sharp* between them, that they departed asunder one from the other" (see Acts 15:36-40). But later those wounds of disagreement were healed, for Paul wrote to Timothy: "Get *Mark* and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry" (2 Tim. 4:11)!

In addition to this letter, those on the regular mailing list received two previous articles. One, **THE NEW JERUSALEM**, written in 2014, includes a photo of Arlene and me. (For any who may not know, she passed from this life October 10, 2019.) We never took each other for granted, but now, not having her, I realize, more than ever, what a treasure she was to me. The other article **THE KINGDOM OF GOD—POSTPONED OR PRESENT?** was written in 2013. Printed copies of these messages can be received through the mail upon request; or can be viewed under "Articles" on our website: ralphwoodrow.org.

I have long favored **Preterist** explanations which are reflected in these two articles. For any who may not understand the term "Preterist," this is a term that is applied to events that have *already* happened. When we read a prophecy in the Bible, we should ask: "Is this FUTURE or FULFILLED?"

Years ago I would sometimes hear the gospel song "Matthew Twenty-Four":

*While upon the Mount of Olives his disciples came to him, Saying tell us **when** these things are going to be....**We** are living, surely living in the days he speaks about. All of these we **now** are having every day, I believe the end is nearing every door...Just compare today with Matthew Twenty-Four.*

While well-intended, the evidence (in our view) is overwhelming that Matthew 24 was *not* a prophecy about OUR day, but about things that happened in the first century, within **that** generation, as Jesus clearly said "not a generation living 2,000 years later!" (Matt. 23:36; 24:34).

Today, of course, there are wars, famines, and earthquakes "things that Jesus mentioned in Matthew 24. But even then such things were not mentioned as signs of the end" just the opposite! Jesus told the disciples they would see things like this, "but the end is NOT yet" (Matt. 24:6). Strange, isn't it, that some preach these things are signs of the end, when Jesus said they were **not!**

What would signal the end of the temple and Jerusalem "when "one stone would not be left upon another" would be what Jesus called the "abomination of desolation," or as Luke's parallel account phrases it: "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is *near*" (Luke 21:20). All of this *unmistakably* happened in **A.D. 70**. I find it very strained when some attempt to make it something yet *future*. Years ago when there was a lot of talk about the atomic bomb, some even supposed the abomination of desolation was the A-bomb! It is true an A-bomb can cause desolation, but that was not the subject of Matthew 24.

Despite all the trouble going on in the world, God is still on the throne. As people of faith, we are on the winning team, "more than conquerors" through Him.

In closing I thought it might be of some general interest to include photos of two Palm Springs "Celebrity Homes." In the one on the left, taken a few days ago, I am standing in front of the former residence of Gene Autry; on the right, the house that was owned by Elvis Presley for over seven years, up until his death in 1977.

Sincerely,

Ralph Woodrow

