LIVING EPISTLES By Matt Hennecke

As best we can determine, there were about 40 writers of the Bible. Moses and several prophets wrote most of the Old Testament books. Eight or nine men are credited with writing the New Testament. The most prolific of the New Testament authors was Paul who wrote almost half of the New Testament books. John comes in second, followed by the apostle Peter. They all were, of course, inspired by the Holy Spirit.

 What is interesting to me is that all of the writers of the Bible were in a sense writing about one event, or, to be more accurate, one Person: Jesus Christ. The Old Testament writers wrote *prophetically*, while the New Testament writers wrote *posthumously.* So, they all wrote about Jesus; but Jesus did not write a single word himself.

 Well, that may not be quite accurate. John chapter 8 records an event when some scribes and Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery. They tested Jesus by asking, *“Now in the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?”* You remember what happened next? *“Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground.”*  This interesting and compelling event has been the subject of much conjecture. What did Jesus write? Barclay speculates Jesus wrote on the ground the sins of those who stood there testing Him. The entire event isn’t even found in the oldest manuscripts.

 So here’s the question: Why didn’t Jesus author a single word of Scripture? Why? Because He *is* the Word. But this doesn’t mean that Jesus didn’t write. He did write, and He still writes. No, He does not write with a reed pen on parchment. He uses a different stylus on a different medium.

 In 2 Corinthians 3, Paul says something amazing to the Christians there when he commends their faith and says of them *“you are a letter written by Christ… not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.”*

In other words, true believers are *living letters* written by Christ for others to read. We are meant to be His penmanship, so others see Him in us.

 So, Christ does indeed write and is still writing, and we are His parchment, His penmanship, His people. When we get into the Word – or more accurately when the Word gets into us – Christ is there writing Himself into every part of our inner being. Our will is being overwritten by His will, and thus we become His living letters.

 The Lord’s Supper, in a way, is the act of dipping of ourselves into the ink of Christ’s blood so that by our lives we can be epistles of Christ to the world. While we have no evidence of Jesus authoring anything with pen and ink, He is the Author of our salvation. The Hebrew writer put it this way: *“Though He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered, and being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him*.” (Hebrews 5:8-9). As we partake of the memorial meal, it’s important to remember the Author of salvation. Let us fill our minds with the memory of the body He sacrificed and fill our hearts with the ink of His blood so that others might see His hand working in us.

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