

My Thoughts for Sunday, 19 June 2016
“Whosoever Will”

“And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

(Revelation 22:17)

Looking back to my early years of adulthood I remember the two saddle horses I owned for some time. One was a beautiful Palomino the other was a retired, or should I say a rejected, bay gelding trained to be used in harness racing. It seems that the bay just couldn't keep up the pace with his competitors. Thus, I got him cheap and made him a saddle horse. He was nothing fancy but we had many a nice ride especially those nighttime rides along those abandoned and removed railroad lines in the light snows of our New England winters. I stabled my horses at the local training track where there were always extra stables. It was convenient also as I would be asked to hitch the bay up to a spare sulky and run with those in training.

As a follower of the harness racing crowd and living my free time at the training track I was also led to enjoy the regular livestock auctions. They were called livestock because sometimes livestock was actually auctioned, along with used cars, tools, saddles, and other tack and who knew what else might show up on the auction block. I remember there were usually several large crates behind the auctioneers' podium. Not all were opened every week. On occasion a single hammer or other tool or a piece of saddlery would be put up for auction. If the auctioneer got the desired bid for the item, miraculously, one crate would be opened full of that same item. He would say in a loud voice to get everyone's attention, *“Whoever wants one of these wonderful items for the same price, come and get it.”* Most often it was a good buy. Other times the bid didn't seem to meet the auctioneer's desire and no crate would be forthcoming.

I'm sure most of us have heard similar statements made, beginning with “whoever” or “whosoever.” Just to list a few examples from the dictionary:

A prize will be given to *whoever* solves the riddle.

Whoever wants to come along is welcome to join us.

He's an honest man, *whoever* his friends might be.

Whoever did this will be held accountable.

Many of the “whoever” statements we hear today require a price or come with consequences. Whoever wants this, there is a cost. Or, whoever did this is certainly going to pay. I’m sure you can remember some such statements also.

Anyone familiar with the words of Jesus, as recorded in the book of Revelation, Paul’s letter to the Romans and the Gospels, should remember many of the statements beginning with “whosoever”. There were many and varied. None carried a price and the consequences were all positive. Let’s look at a few examples. Beginning at the end with Revelation 22:17 we see one of Jesus’ greatest offers, needed by all and rejected by many. He stated, “*And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*” That’s His offer, **take the water of life freely**. What more could one ask for. Look again at one of the most publicized promises of Jesus, plastered on bumper stickers across the nation, “*Whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*” (John 3:16). There it is again, “WHOSOEVER”, not just the rich, the poor, men, women, children, Americans, foreigners. No, He said, “whosoever”. This means anyone, you, me, your neighbor, your enemy, that stranger who wouldn’t give you the time of day this morning. He said whoever believes, it is his. Paul, in his letter to the Romans wrote, “*Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*” (Romans 10:13) We go to Jesus’ statement written by the gospel writer John, “*Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die*” (John 11:26).

A very special statement of promise recorded by the apostle John regarding the importance of confessing the deity of Jesus; “*Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God*” (1 John 4:15). What is holding you back? There is no major outlay of expense, nothing you have to fear. Nothing but the promises of your loving, generous Creator who only wants your love in return. He is offering rewards, without cost, to anyone and everyone willing to believe that Jesus is our Savior. Nothing we can say or do can give the return that is free from Him for believing in Jesus who came down to earth with the sole purpose of wiping out our sins before God, and giving us the sure means of living with Him eternally in the heavenly realm with God the Father. We should and must realize that because someone does not choose to believe these Words of the Lord, their unbelief does not negate the truth of God or His Holy Word. One must also realize the consequence of this unbelief. “*For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*”

