

*"I know, O LORD, that Thy judgments are right, and that Thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me." Psalms 119:75 KJV*



The wood carver selects wood for carving that is pliable and submissive to his chisel without splitting and cracking. The finished work is in the mind and hands of the wood carver and he chooses wood which yields best to his chisel. A favorite chisel is called a "gouge." Whichever is selected, it will "afflict" the wood to remove the unneeded parts. A sculptor was once asked "How do you make such wonderful pieces?" He replied, "I imagine what I want it to be and then I just get rid of all the extra bits." Simplicity is the cornerstone of Holiness. Holiness is doing that which is right in God's eyes, not yours. All the infinite attributes and capabilities of God rest on a single foundation; His Holiness. God is one and His character is one. While He can do all and by Him all exists, He never changes. From everlasting to everlasting He has always been and will always be *"the God which cannot lie; the Father of lights with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning."* The same God that breathed the universe in six days is the same God that made Himself flesh and raised Himself from the dead. He will come with a shout of Joy to redeem His own and a Voice of thunder and triumph for His enemies! When all of creation is folded and put away and a new existence is created, God will still be the same! *"Jesus Christ; the same yesterday and today and forever."* God "afflicts" the redeemed to get rid of "all the extra bits." *"Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."* God's purpose in the life of every saint is to conform them to the image of Christ. *"For whom [God] did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered and being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him."* If the wood could talk, I'm sure it wouldn't like the chisel. To escape being firewood it must submit to the gouge. If it cracks or splinters, it will become kindling.

Faithfulness in a manger lay,  
Put on the robe of flesh that day,  
He came to take man's sin away,  
To pay a debt they could not pay! ~CGP

God is not like the carver who will begin over on a new piece if the first fails. He transforms each humble penitent into a work of art that brings Him honor, no matter how resistant they may be. He will present them flawless and finished in the end. *"Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. That in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."* The redeemed will be showpieces of honor for eternity, because of God's faithfulness! We need do nothing but submit to Truth.

*"Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." 1 Thessalonians 5:24 KJV*