

The Wednesday Word, January 24, 2018: Good News for Bad Christians

“Christ died for the ungodly” (Romans 5:6)

Have you ever thought of yourself as a bad Christian? You look at your life and all you see is flaw after flaw. You fail in your thought life. You fall easily. You don't read the word or pray the way you could.

Here's some good news: your Saviour does not condemn you for these failures. There remains no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1).

All of us, no matter in what stage of growth we find ourselves, need to hear the Gospel on an ongoing basis. That's because we forget it on an ongoing basis. We need to remember the words of Elizabeth Prentice who wrote, “The greatest saint on earth has got to reach Heaven on the same terms as the greatest sinner; unworthy, unfit, good-for-nothing, but saved through grace.”

To grow in grace, we need to hear about Jesus, His person, His doing, His dying and rising again.

We need to be immersed in the truth that Jesus is the God-man...God manifest in the flesh.

We need to know that Jesus has perfectly satisfied God's justice.

He has magnified God's Law.

He has entirely met God's demands on us.

He has forever put away sin.

He has completely routed the devil.

He has defeated death.

He has cleansed our conscience.

He has perfectly loved His people.

He has perfectly hated His people's sins.

He has perfectly cleansed His people's sins.

He has perfectly taken them away.

He has perfectly paid for them with His blood.

His Gospel is Good news and more good news.

The Gospel is finished, it is complete.

His Gospel is unsearchable but not incomprehensible.

O that all the churches would preach the Gospel and its manifold applications! At best we get a little bit of grace to make us feel loved, a big bit of law to try to make us behave, and a major amount of condemnation when we don't make the grade.

But that is not the pattern for New Testament ministry.

Speaking of condemnation, even we who are grace preachers sometimes leave our listeners with the impression that "there is now, therefore, still condemnation to those that are in Christ."

But that's wrong! Let's try it again.

"There is now, therefore, only a tiny, teeny bit of condemnation to those in Christ."
Never!

There is NO condemnation to those who struggle and fail. The Gospel is about good news, good news, and more good news (Romans 5:20-21). And that's what is needed if ever we are to grow in grace.

Do you remember the story of the prodigal son? That scallywag disregarded his father and then disgraced himself in every way possible. One old time preacher said, "Do you know the difference between the son in that pig-pen and the pig? The pig never said to himself, "I will arise and go to my father."

No indeed, it's not in the pig's nature to leave the pigpen but the Child of God hates it there.

And the truth is, we've all been in the pigpen at various times. We have all failed, disappointed ourselves, and felt condemned. But the good news is, all the wealth of the righteousness of Christ is ours and all our guilt was His. He is the shepherd who seeks until He finds. Yet we hide from Him and turn away in fear and shame, not because we don't love Him, but because we don't know His love for us. We don't know the Gospel.

And that's the Gospel Truth!