

The Wednesday Word, January 18/2023: Who Says? God Says!

Some years ago, in a town in England, a minister held a gospel meeting. The next morning, a young man called at the house where the preacher had spent the night and asked to see the gentleman who had been preaching the night before. He was welcomed and brought in and upon being seated, he related something of his past life. He said that for many months he had been in very great soul trouble, and distress about his sins, and had longed for rest and salvation. He had gone round all the churches in the town, hoping he might hear something that would give him comfort, but without any result. "But, after the meeting last evening," he said, "I went home so thoroughly wretched that I was unable to sleep a wink the whole night long, and now I have come to you to ask you whether you can tell me out of the Bible, how may I KNOW that MY sins are forgiven?"

"Yes," replied the preacher, "But, before I do, you let me ask you a few questions."

"Certainly," he replied.

"May I ask, how do you expect to be saved?"

"Through Christ alone," said the young man.

"Do you trust in any measure to your works, your prayers, or to any effort of yours?"

"No,"

"Now, tell me, do you believe that God is willing to save you just as you are, in your sins—and NOW!?"

"That I cannot answer," he replied, "I do not know whether God is willing to save me as I am, or not; but one thing I am sure of, and that is, that if God doesn't save me as I am, then I'll never be saved at all, for I am a sinner, and I cannot be better."

"I thank God," the preacher exclaimed, "for having shown you that you are lost. Now, if I can make plain to you from Scripture that God is willing to save you, as you are, will you believe it?"

"Oh yes!" he answered.

The preacher turned to Romans 5:6 and read, "*For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the UNGODLY.*"

"Are you without strength, and 'ungodly'?" the preacher inquired.

"I am," the young man said.

"Then you are the sort of sinner Christ died for?" He nodded assent, so the preacher continued, "Let's read on to verse 8, '*God commendeth His love toward us, in that, WHILE WE WERE YET SINNERS, Christ died for us.*' Now, do you see that God is willing to save you just as you are?"

"I do," he replied.

"Christ has atoned for sin by His death, Christ has been buried and raised from the grave, and now is seated in cosmic authority. I want you now to tell me, do you believe that heaven is satisfied with Christ's death as having made a full, complete, and everlasting satisfaction for all your sins? Think well on the question before you answer."

He paused a little, and then said, "I do believe that."

"Well then," the preacher remarked, "if the Father is satisfied with Christ's death as an atonement for your sins, what charge can He have against you?"

"None, I suppose," he said.

“And if God has no charge against you that Jesus has not met by His atoning sufferings, what have you to be afraid of?”

" Nothing I suppose," he answered, " but I want to know for myself that my sins are forgiven."

" Very well," said the gospel minister, "I'll let the scripture answer your question. It's Acts 13: 38: *“Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.”*

He opened his eyes wider! "Is not 'the forgiveness of sins' exactly what you want?" the preacher asked.

“It is,” he said, looking in evident amazement, as he gazed at the wonderful words of the text before him, and then after a pause added, " But why did they not tell me this before? I never knew of this verse!"

“That I can't explain,” replied the preacher, " but at all events there it is in black and white in God's Word. *“Be it known unto you . . . that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.”* Do you see it all now?" The preacher asked.

" I see," the young man responded, " that the forgiveness of sins is preached to me, but I am not satisfied yet."

“Oh! what more do you want?”

" I want to understand how I may KNOW that MY SINS ARE FORGIVEN."

" The answer to that you will find in the next verse (verse 39), ' *“And by him, ALL THAT BELIEVE are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”* Do you believe in Christ alone as your Saviour?"

“Yes,” was his emphatic answer.

“And that the death of Christ has been accepted as atonement and payment for all your sins?

“I do.”

“You do really believe.”

“Yes, certainly.”

“Then God says that you have been justified from all things. Is He not telling the truth?”

“He must be.”

“Then you are justified from all your sins, for God says, ' ALL that believe are justified,' and you are one of those that do believe.”

The young man's countenance became radiant, his eyes sparkled with gladness, and he exclaimed, " I see it now—I thought I had to FEEL some change first, which was all a mistake. I have only to believe in Jesus, and the Bible says I am justified. I believe it, and I am saved! "

“Is there anything else you would like to ask?” said the preacher. “

”Yes,” the young man said, might we thank God for having saved my soul?”

With delight of heart, they immediately prayed and poured out their hearts in praise and thanksgiving to God for His so great salvation. The young man, it was reported, continued in the gospel until the end of his days.

And that's the Gospel Truth!