

Wednesday Word, January 25, 2023: More than Forgiveness!

Let's get this straight, God, because He is righteous, holy and just, hates sin! Sin is a direct assault on Him and, as such, has earned His wrath, fury and severe displeasure.

Sin is the real obstacle between God and man. We, in our flesh, have an inbuilt hardness and hatred towards God. We are sinners. We deserve damnation. But God, in grace, punished our sins in the person of our substitute Jesus Christ and forgave us. This is good news. Our sins were punished, and we were forgiven.

“But, how is this possible?” you ask, “If He didn’t just forgive our sins what did He do with them?” Here’s the answer. He purged them and put them away (Hebrews 9:26). In grace, love and mercy we were given the gift of the Sin-Bearer, Jesus the Christ. He laid down His life for us. He took our place, becoming a curse instead of us. Our sins were laid on Him. He became our substitute and died instead of us.

The gospel truth is this; God does not, strictly speaking, forgive our sins, He forgives us. God is much too holy to forgive sins arbitrarily. He was righteously insulted by our sins. His holiness was offended by our sins. Because of this, in grace, Christ gave Himself up unto death. During His life, Christ voluntarily made His way to the cross where He died instead of us. There at the cross, He became obedient unto death and by Himself, purged our sins (Hebrews 1:3). By Himself, He put away our sins (Hebrews 9:26).

Today, we stand forgiven because our sins were not swept under the carpet. Our sins were dealt with as the crimes they were. The believer now, by faith, receives personal forgiveness because his sins have been punished in Christ.

So why did God not merely turn a blind eye to our sins? The answer, as we have said, is discovered in His Holiness and justice. God could not be just, and at the same time lay aside His law. He could not ignore the condemnation we had earned. On the contrary, in His grace and justice, He did something about our sins. In the fullness of time, He condemned sin in the flesh (Romans 8:3). By becoming our sin offering, as one of us, Christ condemned the sin of His people and passed judgment on it.

Keep telling yourself this surprising gospel truth. Keep telling yourself that your sins have already been condemned and you have been set free.

The Lord Jesus has implemented and executed judgment upon all our sins and we are forgiven. He has put our sins away and forgotten them (Isaiah 43:25). But again, let us be very clear on this, God did not merely forgive our sins. Instead, He ruthlessly punished them and their bearer at Calvary. In that way, He can righteously forgive us.

What a liberating truth this is to tell yourself. There is now no damnation for those of us who are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1). The penalty of our sins has been paid for by blood, the precious blood of the precious Lamb. As Adolph Saphir said.

“All our sins were lain upon Jesus, everyone (of them) was punished... He executed judgment upon all our sins ... for all the Children of God. “

Adolph Saphir: The Epistle to the Hebrews: Chapter 5.

That’s grace.

And that’s the Gospel Truth!