

### **The Wednesday Word, Feb, 17, 2010: The Believer's Rest**

Our peace with God cannot come from our own character because, "There is none righteous no not one" (Romans 3:10). What an indictment --- not even one of us is righteous enough to stand before God in our own merit! The truth is this, before we were saved, if God had chosen to ignore us, we would have been lost with a capital 'L' (Ps 9:15). We desperately needed divine intervention in our situation. Yet we forget that Grace and Mercy rescued us (Isa 51:1; Ps 40:2) and we, sometimes unconsciously, go about trying to establish our own righteousness. We so quickly overlook the fact that, in spite of all God's past dealings with us, we continually need Him, His power and help. We stand constantly in need His daily grace and mercy-----mercy to keep us from getting what we do deserve (judgment) and grace to give us what we don't deserve (continued favor with God).

Concerning grace and mercy there are three things we need to know.

- (1) We must know that we continually need them:
- (2) We must know that we do not deserve them,
- (3) We must know that we cannot get them by our own effort!

These are three simple, yet easily forgotten, truths!

So how do we continually enjoy our full acquittal before the all-holy God? Is it found in redoubling our religious efforts and by thinking good things about the Almighty? Or is it by praying harder? Or by a little bit of self-sacrifice here and there? Indeed no! It is by faith alone in Christ alone! No amount of activity, even sincere activity, can persuade God to smile upon us with His favor. Our recommendation to God is still not found in what we have in ourselves, but in what we don't have. It is our lack not our fullness that has moved God towards us (Exodus 3:7-8). Likewise, just as it is our sickness, not our health, that qualifies us for the doctor so it is only when we realize how our best efforts are fatally flawed that we can look to Christ alone to be our entire righteousness.

Do you really know that as a believer you continually need grace and mercy? Do you really know that you still don't deserve either of them? And do you know that you still cannot get them by your own effort? Do you know that the crucified Christ is entirely sufficient to mediate between you and the all-holy God of Heaven?

My guilt is great, but greater  
The mercy thou dost give  
Thyself, a spotless Offering  
Hast died that I should live

On Thee my heart is resting  
Ah this is rest indeed  
What else almighty Savior

Can a poor sinner need

In all false religion the worshipper rests his hope of divine favor upon something within his own character, life or performance. The Pharisee did this when he went into the temple and thanked God that he was not as other men (Luke 18:11). So today, there are those who think that they can maintain right standing with God by doing, feeling, and praying more than they used to. They call themselves Christians, but are strangers to the gospel. They think that by their efforts they can oblige God to grant them favor and furthermore, they feel that God would be grossly unfair to reject people so earnest and devout as they.

These self-righteous religionists will not place confidence in Christ's character or His finished work. In their madness they rest in themselves and their efforts, thus rejecting the Christ of God as their only hope. They refuse the one who alone is mighty to save (Isa 63:1).

And that's the Gospel Truth!