

The Wednesday Word, March 13, 2024: The Danger of Resting on Feelings

Because repentance and faith go hand in hand, there are those who think themselves unqualified to ask for mercy. They are concerned that they do not feel repentant enough to ask for salvation. They know that they need the Saviour, but think they lack sufficient repentant feelings to qualify for grace. If this is true of you, let's do a quick Q & A.

Q- Does your lack of being miserable about your sin alter the gospel?

A- No!

Q-Does your lack of feelings in any way change the good news?

A-No!

Q-Does your lack of feelings mean that the gospel is no longer for the undeserving and unlovable?

A-No!

Q-Does your lack of feelings change the graciousness of the Lord Jesus?

A-No

If you are concerned that you do not feel repentant enough to ask for salvation you are trying to receive grace by works. You think you will deserve grace if you show God how bad you feel about your sin. However, this course of action is impossible because grace is reserved exclusively for the undeserving who do not work for it (Romans 4:5).

Here's some good news. The gospel suits us ... it fits us like a glove! It meets us and announces the Christ who saves undeserving sinners. "But" you say, "I don't think I am sufficiently sorry enough to qualify for the gospel." Listen to me, although God gives a godly sorrow that leads to repentance (2 Corinthians 7:9; Romans 2:4), being tearfully miserable about your sins will not persuade God to be more kindly disposed to you than He is in Christ.

Yet, despite this, some people insist that true repentance comes only with tears. If this is so, we must ask, "What's the going rate for tears nowadays?"

Just how many tears does God require? Does he want a bucket full? A half a bucket full? And while we are at it, what size is the bucket anyway?

Listen to me, you are not disqualified from the gospel because of the lack of feelings. Faith does not spring out of feelings; feelings grow out of faith. The less we feel the more we have an opportunity to trust.

Nevertheless, here's the thing, we cannot feel properly until we have believed. This is also so with repentance. All true repentance has its root in faith. Although no one is saved without repentance, repentance is not a condition or cause of grace: it is always the result of grace. Repentance can never earn God's grace and forgiveness. All grace and forgiveness have already been earned for us by the Lord Jesus. The legalist, however, wants us to get all emotional and weep over our sins, but this is not required to move God towards us. God has already moved towards us in the person of Christ Jesus.

Often, as believers, we want to feel saved rather than to simply rest on Christ alone. Again, here's some good news ... we don't have to feel the fact that *Christ is made unto us*

righteousness (1Corinthians 1:30). Likewise, we don't have to feel the fact that, *"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life,"* (John 3:36).

Nor do we have to feel the fact that, *He that hears my word, and believes on him that sent me, has everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life* (John 5:24)

Or even feel the fact that *He that believes on me* (Jesus) *has everlasting life* (John 6:47).

These facts stand firm whether we feel them or not! We are saved apart from feelings for it is written, *"He that comes to God must believe (not feel) that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."* (Hebrews 11:6).

Faith, not feelings, takes a hold of the Finished Work. Without faith no one can even call on the Lord for we can not call on him in whom we have not believed? (see Romans 10:14).

If we insist that we must feel something before believing, then we have promoted feelings to an essential part of salvation. This is a grave error for if we try to work up feelings in order to be accepted by God, then we are seeking grace based on works.

Do feelings have to drop miraculously into our heart to enable us to be saved?

No!

Does the Lord anywhere command that our level of feelings must be correct before He will save us?

No!

We are saved by grace alone.

And that's the Gospel Truth!