

The Wednesday Word, June 1, 2022: The God Who is not in Hiding

In Christ Jesus, God has brought His righteousness near (Isaiah 46:13). Therefore, when telling others of His salvation we need to stress that salvation is not some distant and mysterious thing that we have to work hard to obtain. We don't have to coax God to come near to us. We don't have to, for example, experience the 'warm fuzzies' about God in order to get saved. 'Warm Fuzzies' will not bring salvation any nearer than it already is. Waiting until we feel good about God before we receive salvation is just another form of legalism. Salvation has already been accomplished (2 Corinthians 5:21). It is finished!

God Himself tells us to call upon His name (Psalm 105:1) for to call upon Him is to believe on Him and to believe on Him is to rest in Him. (Romans 10:13; Romans 4:24; Acts 16:31).

As we gossip the gospel, we don't offer people a long list of duties to do, or feelings to be formed to make God think well of us. The gospel is not about our work; rather it is the good news of the work and person of the cross, apart from and outside of us in history. Our saving work, if you would like to call it that, is to believe on Him ... the One who has accomplished salvation on our behalf. (John 6:29).

God has already brought His salvation near. God is not in hiding. He has declared Himself in the person and work of the Lord Jesus (John 1:18).

When faith activates, it causes us to cease working to earn God's favour. Faith sees that, for favour, we do nothing other than rest on the fact that all has been already accomplished on behalf of the believer.

Faith, however, does not complete our salvation; rather it embraces the salvation that has already been accomplished. Faith embraces the fact that Jesus Christ alone has paid for us and rescued us at the cross. Faith sees that this work has been successfully finished (Matthew 1:21; John 19:30).

Again, we must stress that salvation is not a matter of Christ plus faith (Acts 4:12). We must continually stress this truth because it is on this very point that so many depart from the gospel. Such people are sincere, they call themselves Christians, but they are not in the gospel. They believe that their faith makes them acceptable to God. It's a common error. Nevertheless, to believe in Christ plus faith for acceptance is to nullify the finished work.

So, let's say it again, although we are saved through faith, faith is not our Saviour. Our Saviour is Jesus Christ plus nothing. (John 14:6)! He is the object of our faith. (Hebrews 12:2). He alone is our rescuer. What faith does is to take hold of Jesus and His accomplishments and makes them our own. Faith grasps that our saving righteousness is not in us, but outside of us in Christ Jesus.

Faith does not bring salvation into existence, nor does it produce the righteousness by which God justifies us. What faith does, however, is to take something that is already in existence and enables us to reckon it as being our own!

Some years ago an aging Christian lady lay dying in hospital. The new minister of a certain church came on visitation to the ward and mistakenly thought this dying lady was a member of his flock. Approaching her he said, "My dear lady, I'm here to absolve you of your sins," to which the woman sternly replied, "Let me see your hands" "My hands?" questioned the astonished priest. Reluctantly the priest proffered his hands and the old lady examined them. At length she released them, looked at the man and said, "Sir I perceive you to be an impostor: the only man who can absolve me of my sins has nail scars in his hands."

And that's the Gospel Truth!