

The Wednesday Word, June 3, 2009: 'The Priest Who Brings Us to God'

Let me ask you a question. Are you more conscious of your sins than you are of the fact that they have already been paid for and taken away? Too much focus on self is unhealthy! As gospel driven believers we need to concentrate, not on our sins, but on Jesus and the fact that He has paid for them.

The Lamb of God has taken them all away! Our focus now is, therefore, to be centered on Him. It is because of Him alone that we are forgiven, accepted and redeemed children of God!

But there's yet more on which we can center our attention! Not only has Jesus taken away our sins, He has also brought us to God (1 Peter 3:18)! This is good news. I could never get to God by my frail and faulty efforts, but Jesus, by His person and performance has already brought me there. But, there's even more good news to think about than this! He, the Lord Jesus as our Great High Priest is at this precise moment exercising His ministry for our benefit! As our penal substitute He bought us for God and as our High Priest He has brought us to God. By the ministry of His priesthood, He now sustains, keeps, maintains and protects every one of His blood bought people.

Our High Priest has now given us free and open access to the Father. Someone asks, "Exactly how near has He actually brought us to the Father?" The Hymn writer answers that question well when He says,

"So near so very near to God
I nearer cannot be
For in the person of His Son
I am as near as He."

We are brought to God "in Christ". Peter tells us, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Pet. 3:18). We are a redeemed people whom He has purchased for Himself so that we would be with Him forever. Jesus, speaking to the disciples, promised it like this, "that where I am, there ye may be also"(John 14:3). We, therefore, will lose this nearness to God only when Christ loses His ----and that will never happen---for He is God manifest in the flesh. We may fail, fall and act with inconsistency---we say this to our shame, but our High Priest retains our nearness to God! The religious, self-righteous man rejects this statement. However, the truth is that access to God is not founded upon any Law or system based upon our performance. Our nearness to God is based on Christ and His performance alone.

God values the finished work and person of His Son and our faith rests on the fact that God sees Him and is satisfied. It is impossible that God will ever slight the sacrifice and person of His precious Son. In virtue of the doing and dying of Jesus, God acts in our favor, according to the value He puts on Christ's work and person!

Christ by His shed blood has purchased nearness to God for us. By divine grace, Christ now exercises His priesthood as He ever-lives to intercede for us at the right hand of the Father (Hebrews 7:25). As our Prophet, Priest and King, He applies His word to us and, in the face of every trial, difficulty, heartache and suffering, leads us on to our destiny.

We are perfectly suited to having Christ as our Priest for we always need Him! There is never a moment when we are so perfect in ourselves that we can dismiss Him. In His wisdom, God, knowing what we are like, has provided us with the perfect Priest who ever lives in His presence, so that we would be sustained and kept by grace.

Our greatest danger is that we quickly forget the gospel. Our natural tendency is to do just that. We must, therefore, constantly live in the light of the finished work. The more we count on the fact that we have the Father's forgiveness, and that Christ alone is our righteousness, the more sin and its effects will lose their grip on us.

And that's the Gospel Truth!