

The Wednesday Word, June 19, 2013: The Gospel and the Self-Reliant Man!

Ephesians 2:13: "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made near by the blood of Christ."

The self-reliant man feels that in order to be brought near to God, he must add something to Calvary. Religion has taught him that he must do something to earn the smile of heaven. Watch him labour as he tries to climb the imaginary stairway to heaven.

The self-reliant man is quite at home with the idea of self-denial for He knows that he as a sinner needs to make amends. It is only reasonable, therefore, that he should do something, something like determine to live differently to make up for his failures. He wants to draw near to God, but he cannot see that the blood of Christ is the only way to bring him there. He seems entirely oblivious to the fact that we are saved, "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy," (Titus 3:5). He hasn't realised that salvation is, "not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:9). In this matter of drawing near to God, he, from the depths of his being, doesn't understand that we cannot improve upon the blood. He doesn't know that to add to the blood is to subtract from it. He doesn't realise that to supplement the blood is to deduct from it.

Is he a decent man? Almost certainly!

Is he a good man? He's probably as good as the next man.

But is he lost? Most definitely! Why? For he will not, by faith, submit himself to the righteousness which is of God. He constantly, by attempting to contribute something to his salvation, places himself in opposition to the shed blood of Calvary. He does not believe what it says in our text that, "... now in Christ Jesus you who sometimes were far off are made near by the blood of Christ."

The true believer rests in the mercy of God. He receives Christ as all his righteousness. He is never at peace with himself and his performance, but is content to dwell securely in the grace and mercy of the Saviour who shed His blood for him. He distrusts himself yet at the same time accepts God's declaration that all his sins have already been punished on Jesus.

The following verse could be his theme song,

"The Blood gives access to God on high,
From "far off places" it brings us nigh;
To precious blessings that never die,
It will never lose its power."

Did you hear the story of when the world famous portrait of the Mona Lisa was sent on tour to America? Apparently, in New York, a man skipped over the barrier and quickly added a moustache to her upper lip. He thought he could make an improvement!

Is that story true? Of course it's not true! What kind of a fool would think he could improve on Leonardo da Vinci's priceless work of perfection? Yet such a man is less foolish than the people who think that, by their own contributions, they can improve on the perfections of Christ's redemption.

We need to quit trying to add a spiritual moustache to the already perfect work of Christ on our behalf. We have already been given the right of access and brought near by the blood. There is no need to try to improve on that!

And that's the Gospel Truth!