

The Wednesday Word, July 5, 2023

Nothing in Faith That Saves!

There is no saving quality in faith. It is nothing in and of itself. Yet, the scriptures clearly proclaim that we are justified by faith (Romans 3:28). How is it possible that faith is nothing in and of itself, yet it saves multitudes?

Here's how:

Faith lays hold of Christ (1 Timothy 6:12a) and grasps that saving merit is found in Christ alone (Romans 3:24). Genuine faith understands that it is not because Christ is in us that we are saved, but rather salvation is ours because we are in Christ. We are saved by the perfect accomplishments of the Lord Jesus 2000 years ago.

The summary of our faith is this: Christ Jesus is our Saviour; He is in heaven; He is our righteousness and right standing before God; He is our treasury of grace and mercy; He is on the throne of Omnipotence and at the same time, He is our ever-living High Priest (Hebrews 4:14, Ephesians 1:11; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Romans 3:21-26; Colossians 2:3). Furthermore, faith knows and grasps that the righteousness which justifies us is imputed to us. This saving righteousness is not infused into us. (Romans 4:6; 10:3-4) Faith sees these things and grasps that our entire hope is in one man and one man only, the heavenly man, the Lord Jesus.

Our hope is in no man on earth and certainly never in us.

John Bunyan writes of how one day he was in turmoil as to his standing before God. He didn't know whether he was saved or lost. He wrote, *"Suddenly a sentence fell upon my soul 'Thy righteousness is in heaven.' And I thought I saw with the eyes of my soul, Jesus Christ at God's right hand; there, I say was my righteousness; so that, wherever I was or whatever I was doing, God could not say of me, 'he lacks my righteousness' for that was just before Him. I also saw moreover that it was not my good frame of heart that made my righteousness better nor my bad frame that made my righteousness worse; for my righteousness was Jesus Christ Himself, 'the same yesterday today and forever.' My chains fell off, I was loosened from my afflictions and my temptations fled away. I went home rejoicing for the grace and love of God. Now Christ was all; all my righteousness, all my sanctification and all my redemption (1 Corinthians 1:30)."* John Bunyan, "Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners 35-36),".

The righteousness which is imputed to the believer is Christ Himself. When we talk of the words 'impute' or 'imputed' some folks get confused. Perhaps the concept is a little difficult to understand at first. However, a clear illustration of its meaning can be found in the New Testament in the book of Philemon where Paul writes to his old friend about the runaway slave Onesimus. He says, *"If He has wronged you or owes you anything, put that to my account."* In a similar manner, our entire sin and guilt have been charged to Christ's account and Christ's entire righteousness has been credited to ours (Philippians 3:9). This is imputation and it is a truth that stabilizes and liberates us as we let its meaning seep into the depths of our being.

So let us say it again, we are not made right with God by any quality within us; nor does the

performing of an act of faith save us. If performing an act of faith was the ground of our salvation, it would make faith a qualifying work for salvation. If this were the case, we would no longer be saved by grace alone. (Romans 10:4; Romans 11:6).

And that's the Gospel Truth!