

## **The Wednesday Word' August 9, 2023: Bathed in the Gospel: Part 2**

Popular as they are in some quarters, the believer has no need to be taught techniques of spiritual self-crucifixion.

Why not?

Because self-crucifixion is both spiritually and physically impossible! Try physical crucifixion on a cross and see for yourself. You can hammer the nails into your feet and then maybe, just maybe, into one of your hands, but you can't hammer the last nail into the remaining hand. Likewise, self-imposed spiritual crucifixion is a myth!

With gospel faith, however, techniques of spiritual self-crucifixion are done away with because, as a result of the gospel, we are already reduced to our proper place of brokenness and dependency.

Jesus taught that true discipleship was to deny self, take up our cross and follow Him. (Matthew 16:24). This is exactly what happens when we receive salvation by faith alone. Faith agrees with and embraces God's verdict that we, in ourselves, are nothing and that we stand in total need of the Saviour. In that way we are broken; self is denied; the cross is taken up and we follow Christ. Faith sees that the believer is already crucified with Christ (Galatians 2:20) and that Jesus Christ alone is their life. (Colossians 3:2-4). And that Christ is all and in all. (Colossians 3:11).

Gospel faith will cause us to give up our exhausting and useless efforts to do or to feel something good to encourage God to love us. Have you ever thought that, at times, you need to make that extra special effort at godliness to squeeze more acceptance from the Heavenly Father? I've been there, done that and have many tee-shirts to prove it! However, to regulate our spiritual life by our feelings is to walk in unbelief. The opposite of unbelief is faith and faith rests upon Christ alone. Faith does not rest upon feelings nor upon anything we think we can do to gain approval and acceptance from the Father!

In addition, gospel faith will cause us to agree that as the Scriptures tell us we have 'nothing yet possess all things.' (2 Corinthians 6:10). We don't have to feel that truth, we simply accept it. The unsaved person, seeing this apparent contradiction, may ask how Christians have nothing, yet have all things. Perhaps a statement made more than one hundred years ago by the English preacher J.C. Philpot can help us understand this. He said of 2 Corinthians 6:10,

"It means, having nothing in self, possessing all things in Christ.

My own beggary leads me out of self into His riches.

My own unrighteousness leads me out of self into Christ's righteousness.

My own defilement leads me out of self into Christ's sanctification. My own weakness leads me out of self into Christ's strength.

My own misery leads me out of self into Christ's mercy.

"Having nothing-and yet possessing all things." These two branches of divine truth, so far from clashing with each other-sweetly, gloriously, and blessedly harmonize."

J. C. Philpot: "Spiritual Poverty and Heavenly Riches."

As we bathe ourselves in the gospel, we are delivered from the bondage of having to feel saved. We are also delivered from the exhausting efforts of having to work hard to secure our place in glory.

And that's the Gospel Truth!