

The Wednesday Word, Aug. 28, 2013: The One Who Came From Above

Before He was born, it was announced that Jesus was to be our saviour (Matthew 1:21). Thank God for that! We didn't need a new teacher or another prophet or even a rule maker, we needed a saviour.

So how did Jesus save us?

He saved us by leaving heaven, becoming our substitute and pouring out His saving blood for us. There are 5 powerful pillars on which Christ's gospel is built,

- A) Christ's Incarnation,
- B) Christ's Crucifixion,
- C) Christ's Resurrection,
- D) Christ's Ascension,
- E) Christ's Session.

The gospel is His story. He is centre stage. It is the story of the One who came down, lived, died, was buried and rose again from the dead! We are now, justified, declared not guilty, not by doing something, but by receiving, by faith, that which He has already done.

It was God Himself, who in the strength of His own compassion, left His eternal throne and came down to become one of us. He came down to our sorrows, heartache, pain and sin until at last He became our wounded substitute at the cross. Has this Christ event become personal to you? Have you received His saving work for yourself?

He descended and came along side us saying, "Come unto me." He didn't stand up in heaven and say, "Come up here." No indeed, in grace He came down to seek and to save that which is lost.

We must always remember that all religions boil down to either one of two words, 'Do' or 'Done'. In fact, there are only two religions in the world and one of them is, strictly speaking, an un-religion. Here are the two,

(1) The religion that tells you that to get to heaven you must do something ... you must take the sacraments, go on pilgrimages, say prayers at set times, be good, don't eat meat etc, etc. They are the religions of DO! In fact, all religions, when it comes to this business of getting to Heaven, are primarily the same. They all tell us what they think we should do.

In the light of this, it is really no big deal when someone converts from one religion to another. When a Roman Catholic, for example, converts to Hinduism (or vice versa), all that has happened is that they have exchanged one set of rules for another. They may have identified God as being someone different than whom they first believed, but they've now got a new set of Do's whereby they reach Him.

2) Then we have the great un-religion, Gospel Christianity. This tells us that there is nothing we can do to improve our position before God. It informs us that everything required from us, by God, has already been done, on our behalf, by the Lord Jesus, the One who came down from Heaven as our saviour/substitute.

The gospel informs us that we are not given eternal life as a reward for what we do. It tells us that we are in no way saved, kept or secured by our works! We are saved entirely by grace; kept by grace and

secured by grace. Our salvation is about grace from beginning to end! The Lord Jesus came down from heaven and went to the cross where He poured out His precious blood for us. What grace is this?

Are you still trying to earn acceptance and favour by your performance? It's easy to slip back into that death trap. I fall for it just about every day. However it is only as we grow in our understanding of the grace which has baptised us with love and mercy that we are liberated to serve, love and obey our Saviour and God.

When He, from His lofty throne,
Stooped to do and die,
Everything was fully done;
Hearken to His cry!

Till to Jesus' work you cling
By a simple faith,
"Doing" is a deadly thing—
"Doing" ends in death.

Cast your deadly "doing" down—
Down at Jesus' feet;
Stand in Him, in Him alone,
Gloriously complete.

And that's the Gospel Truth!